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THE PRIEST IN THE PULPIT.

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THE PRIEST IN THE PULPIT:

A Manual

Of Homiletics and Catechetics.

Adapted from the German of

REV. IGNAZ SCHUECH, O.S.B.

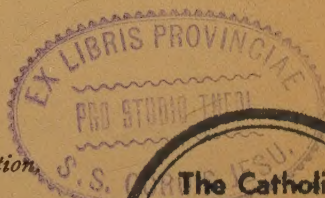
BY

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EDITOR'S NOTE.

REV. IGNATIUS SCHUECH, O.S.B., the author of the original work, the first part of which is here rendered into English, was born at Kornitz, in Moravia, May 1, 1823. At the age of twenty he joined the Benedictine Abbey at Kremsminster, Austria. After his ordination to the priesthood June 19, 1848, he was made assistant pastor successively in two large parishes, and in that position proved himself "an eloquent orator, a parental friend of children, and a zealous and devoted confessor." Six years later he was called to the chair of Pastoral Theology in the Seminary of St. Florian, which he filled most successfully for thirty-four years. As early as the year 1865 he issued a limited edition of his Pastoral Theology for the use of his pupils, and upon urgent appeals from bishops and priests reissued it in a more comprehensive form for the benefit of seminarians and priests in general. He had the pleasure of seeing it reach nine editions, and since his happy and holy death on January 9, 1893, three further editions have appeared to date.

Of the many encomiums showered upon the work after each edition, let it suffice to quote one of recent date, that of the *Acta Pontificia*, Vol. I, Fasc. I. This monthly brochure, published at Rome, devotes part of its space in each issue to some question of Pastoral

Theology and bases its discussions and decisions on Schuech's Pastoral Theology, saying in explanation: "The work of Father Schuech is perfect in every respect and superior to any other of its kind. There is none better suited to our times, none that shows maturer judgment or furnishes more reliable information."

Pastoral Theology in its entirety embraces the whole activity of the priest in his teaching office, in his public prayer and sacrifice and the administration of the sacraments and sacramentals, as well as his work among the people, guiding and guarding them individually and collectively. Though intimately connected with all the sacred sciences, Pastoral Theology encroaches upon none, but is rather the matured fruit of all. Whilst presenting the highest ideals and ultimate reasons for its directions, and therefore justly claiming the rank of a science, it aims to apply all theological knowledge to the practical needs of souls, and hence is properly classed with the arts, or rather is, in truth, "the art of all arts."

The first work of the pastor is that of teaching, and this forms the subject-matter of the present volume. The pastor is obliged to instruct and train the child in religion from the earliest dawn of reason, and he is guided in this work by the treatise on Catechetics. He is bound to continue and amplify this instruction for those advanced in spiritual knowledge, and is furnished the requisite help and direction by that part of Pastoral Theology called Homiletics.

The author treats, though concisely, yet exhaustively, in this part of Homiletics of the matter for preaching and its development, arrangement, style and delivery. He then dwells on the division of sermons, according to their subject-matter, into dogmatic, moral, historical and liturgical sermons; and according to their form, into homilies, sermons on ordinary and those on extraordinary occasions, concluding with apposite suggestions for remote and proximate preparation.

The supreme necessity and dignity of catechetical instruction has been luminously set forth in the recent encyclical of our Holy Father on that subject. "For a priest," he says, "there is no duty more grave, no obligation more binding, than this one. The office of the catechist is not much sought after, because, as a rule, it is deemed of little account, as it does not lend itself to the winning of applause. But this, in our opinion, is an estimate born of vanity and not of truth. We are quite willing to admit the merits of those pulpit orators, who, out of genuine zeal for the glory of God, devote themselves either to the defense and maintaining of the faith or to eulogizing the heroes of Christianity. But their labor presupposes labor of another kind,—that of the catechist. Where the latter is wanting, the foundations are wanting, and they labor in vain who build the house. The teaching of the Catechism never fails to be of profit to those who listen to it. If faith languishes in our days, if it has almost disappeared among large numbers, the reason is that the duty of catechetical

teaching is either fulfilled very superficially or altogether neglected. Benedict XIV. has described the teaching of the Catechism as 'the most effective means for spreading the glory of God and securing the salvation of souls.'"

As if in anticipation of this appeal, or rather moved by the one spirit that actuates the Church of Christ, priests and teachers have in late years taken up this work with new energy, and in a number of excellent publications given others the benefit of their application and experience. The indefatigable Archbishop Messmer, of Milwaukee, has edited the valuable work of Spirago's *Method of Explaining the Catechism*, whilst Father Clarke, S. J., has translated *The Catechism Explained*, by the same author. Of a similar character and of equal value is Howe's *The Catechist. The Catechism in the Infant School*, by Rev. L. Noble, O. S. B., treats of one of the most difficult parts of catechetical instruction. A very carefully elaborated scheme for catechetical instruction in parochial schools is presented in *The Christian Doctrine Teacher's Manual*.

Notwithstanding these and other similar works, the Catechetics of Father Schuech does not appear to have lost its usefulness. It points out and thoroughly analyzes the pedagogical principles and methods of instruction, and dwells at length on the peculiarities of the child-mind and child-language. It devotes itself not only to the mental instruction of the child, but with quite as much care and attention to his spiritual and moral training. Thus the author, after treating in five

exhaustive chapters of the matter and manner of instruction, teaches how to influence the heart and will of the child, how to train him to practise the moral religious life, and how to lead him from the lower to the higher grades of prayer and attendance at divine service and to a fruitful reception of the holy sacraments.

The language, from the very nature of the subject, is in some parts more technical than usual. But our seminarians and priests, schooled in logic and in scholastic terminology, will not find this a serious objection. The editor has made only such changes in the text as are required by local laws and conditions. The long introductory chapter on *The Person of the Pastor* has been retained, partly because of its intrinsic value and partly because the personality of the priest enters so largely into his works of teaching. Most wise and helpful exhortations on this subject are given by the Church in administering the various Minor and Major Orders. An appendix *On the Instruction of Converts* has been added to the part on Catechetics. May God, who has so abundantly blessed the original work of the author, deign to bless likewise the humble labor of

THE EDITOR.

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THE PRIEST IN THE PULPIT.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

ON THE PERSON OF THE PASTOR

ART. I.

DEFINITION, SOURCES, AND LITERATURE OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY.

I. Definition of Pastoral Theology. Relation to other Branches of Theology. Necessity.—Pastoral Theology is the science of a proper administration of the various offices of the Catholic clergy. Those offices are religious instruction, administration of the Sacraments, and spiritual guidance—each directed to the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Pastoral Theology is a part of Practical Theology, and is intimately connected with the principal branches of Historical and Systematic Theology. Dogmatic Theology presents, in a scientific form, the whole Revelation; Moral Theology derives from Revelation the rules of action and of Christian life; Ecclesiastical Law has for its object the government of the Church as a body politic; Historical Theology records the development of the organization of the Church in her external and internal life.

Pastoral Theology derives from Catholic Dogma the knowledge of the mysteries of Christian faith and conduct, and the means of applying them to the individual

as the last end of all pastoral activity. Whilst Canon Law deals more with the *rights* of the various members of the hierarchy of the Church, Pastoral Theology dwells on the *duties* connected with the ecclesiastical office and the best manner of fulfilling them. The examples of Christ, of the apostles, and of other apostolic men as exhibited in Church History are presented directly as models in Pastoral Theology. It is still more intimately related to Moral Theology. Moral Theology points out the duties of all men, and considers human actions in general, examining their merit or demerit with reference to their last end; Pastoral Theology points out the obligations of the priest to lead men to the attainment of this end, and thus confines itself to pastoral acts, considering them with respect to the special end of the pastoral office.

A scientific treatise and study of this branch of theology is necessary, because pastoral labor must be guided by certain definite principles, and these principles cannot be constructed *a priori*. According to St. Gregory the Great, the "*regimen animarum* is the art of arts," which requires constant practice and study, and which admits of continual progress and improvement.

An imprudent and improper administration of the pastoral office, not governed by fixed, reliable, and approved principles and rules, is calculated to expose the most sacred of all things to profanation, and to work incalculable mischief.

Pastoral Theology teaches the immediate application of the knowledge gained from Dogma, Morals, Exegesis, Church History, etc. Its study is therefore properly reserved for the end of the theological course. But thenceforth, and throughout the entire life of the pastor, it must remain the chief object of his constant and attentive study and reference.

2. Sources and Auxiliaries of Pastoral Theology.—The general sources of Pastoral Theology are: 1. Holy Scripture and Tradition; 2. The decrees of Ecumenical Councils, and especially of the Council of Trent; 3. The *Corpus Juris Canonici*, the Roman Catechism, and the liturgical books of the Church—the Missal, Breviary, Roman Pontifical, *Ceremoniale Episcoporum*, and *Rituale Romanum*; 4. The decisions of Popes and of the Sacred Congregations.

The particular sources are: 1. The decrees of National and Provincial Councils, some of which are of general usefulness, as for instance, that of Rome under Benedict XIII., and those of Milan under St. Charles Borromeo; 2. Episcopal enactments in and outside of diocesan synods, diocesan statutes, pastoral letters; 3. Rules and constitutions of the various orders and societies; 4. Legitimate customs, *i. e.*, such as are not contrary to the spirit of Christ and the Church; and 5. For some countries the Concordats between the Sacerdotium and the Imperium.

These sources furnish the principles which, when formulated and arranged systematically, constitute the science of Pastoral Theology.

The cognate and auxiliary sciences of Pastoral Theology are very numerous: 1. The whole range of Historical and Systematic Theology: the theory of Revelation and Religion, the study of the Bible, the life and labors of Christ and the apostles; Patrology, Patristics, Ecclesiastical History, especially monographs of individual saintly and learned pastors;¹ Synodology,

¹ *Historia vitæ SS. Thomæ a Villanova, Thomæ Aquinatis et Laurentii Justiniani in usum cleri proposita* ab Ig. Feigerle, Vienna, 1839. Lives of Philip Neri, Francis of Sales, Vincent de Paul, Camillus Lellis, Alphonsus Liguori, Cure d'Ars, etc. John Baptist de Rossi (Introduction by Cardinal Vaughan).

Jewish and Christian Archæology, Dogma, Morals, Apologetics, Canon Law; 2. The philosophical sciences: Logic, Metaphysics, Psychology, Anthropology, Pedagogics; 3. Civil Law for reference in testaments, restitution, etc., and medical science in the care of the sick.

3. Sketch of the History and Literature of Pastoral Theology.

a. In ancient times. The first pastoral rules were given by Our Lord Himself to His disciples, when He sent them to preach the Gospel. (Matt. x. 5-42; Luke x. 1-16.) St. Paul in his letters to Timothy and Titus laid the foundation of the science of Pastoral Theology, and illustrated his precepts by his own example. The apostolic and post-apostolic fathers and ecclesiastical writers have issued individual rules to their clergy, suited to the character and circumstances of the times, and have defined and explained the exercise of pastoral functions. Thus, for instance, St. Ignatius M., *Epistolæ*; St. Clem., *Rom. Epist. ad Corinth*; St. Polycarp, *Epist. ad Philipp.*; St. Cyprian, *Epist. de Lapsis, De Oratione Dom.* The Roman Pontiffs in their decretals: for instance, Gelasius I., Innocent I. More extensive treatises and collections of pastoral rules are found in the (85) canons and constitutions of the apostles; in St. Gregory Nazianzen, *Or. Apol. de Fuga sua et Epistolæ*; the Catecheses of St. Cyril of Jerusalem; St. Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministror.*; St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana, De Catechizandis Rudib.*; St. Chrysostom, *De Sacerdotio*; St. Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis*.

b. In mediæval times. The scholasticism and mysticism of the middle ages sought to systematize and apply to interior life the treasure of pastoral rules embodied in the treatises and letters of the fathers. Pastoral Theology, however, was not yet taught as a separate science, but in connection with Canon Law, Morals, and Exegesis.

Pastoral treatises were written by St. Isidore, *De Officiis Ecclesiasticis*; Rabanus Maurus, *De Institutione Clericorum et Cæremoniis Ecclesiasticis*, *De Sacris Ordinibus*, *De Divinis Sacramentis*; Regino de Prüm, *De Ecclesiasticis Disciplinis*; St. Bernard, *De Consideratione*; *De Moribus et Officiis Episcoporum*; *De Vita et Moribus Clericorum*; St. Thomas Aq.; St. Bonaventure, *De Sex Alis Seraphicis*; Laurence Justinian, *De Regimine et Institutione Prælatorum*; St. Antonine, *Summa*, etc.

c. In modern times. From the sixteenth century on pastoral subjects were more extensively treated in synodal addresses and decrees; in pastoral conferences and in spiritual retreats; in various works on the chief functions of the priest, or on the education of the clergy. Such writings are: Cardinal Cajetan, *Summa de Casibus*; Charles Borromeo, *Instructiones Pastorum*, *orationes sex in conc. provinc. habitæ*, *Acta Ecclesiæ Mediolanæ*; Molina, *Instructio Sacerdotum*; Abelly, *Sacerdos Christianus*; Soto, *Institutio Sacerdotum*; Segneri, *Instructio Parochi*; Passevin, *Praxis Curæ Pastoralis*; Musart, *Manuale Parochorum*; Neumayr, *Vir Apostolicus*; Sohner, *Instructiones Practicæ*.

Special works on Pastoral Theology were written by M. Schenkl, *Institutiones Theologiæ Pastoralis*; Pöwondra, *Systema Theologiæ Pastoralis*; Sailer, *Theologie Pastorale*. Dubois.

ART. II.

THE NATURAL QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTOR.

4. *Qualifications of the Pastor in General.*—The mission and the power to dispense the graces of redemption to man, the “ministry of reconciliation,” was entrusted by Christ exclusively to a particular state, namely, the clergy. This work of continuing the redemption of Christ, the God-man, requires supernatural-divine and

natural-human endowments on the part of the members of that body, the pastors.

They must possess the requisite natural qualities, innate and acquired, and must develop these qualities to obtain the pastoral office, and to administer it successfully and fruitfully. The pastoral power, however, is from God; the most excellent gifts of nature and grace—knowledge, piety, prudence, etc.,—do not confer it, and sins and faults do not deprive of it. The power is ever of divine origin, and is given *radicitus* in the sacrament of Holy Orders. But since the Church is an organized, external corporation in which Christ has commissioned the apostles and their successors, the Pope and bishops, to govern not only the flock, but also the subordinate pastors, it is necessary for the preservation of order and unity that, besides the natural and supernatural qualifications required, the cleric should be authorized by his legitimate superior. “How shall they preach unless they be sent?” Three conditions, then, are necessary to be admitted to the pastoral office and to administer it properly, viz., the natural qualification—vocation, education, and continued training; the supernatural qualification through the sacrament of Holy Orders; and the ecclesiastical qualification through canonical mission.

5. Vocation to the State of the Priesthood is an act of Divine Providence by which God elects some before others, and endows them with the qualities requisite to assume and properly discharge the duties of their state.

God calls all men to salvation, but not by one and the same way. In the natural as well as in the supernatural order, He leads man to his destiny, not immediately, but mediately through his fellow-man. He therefore selects from among all some to serve as instruments for the salvation of others.

The divine vocation to the prototypal priesthood is abundantly proven. God chose the tribe of Levi alone, of all the tribes of Israel, for service in the holy tabernacle; from the tribe of Levi again He selected the family of Aaron alone to "minister to Him in the priestly office, and to offer sacrifice to make reconciliation for His people." Even Christ, the Supreme Pastor, "did not glorify Himself, that He might be made a high-priest, but He that said unto Him: 'Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.'" When Christ "called unto Him His apostles, whom He would Himself," He told them: "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." In like manner "the Lord appointed other seventy-two, and sent them." When the apostles were about to choose another apostle in place of the traitor Judas, they appointed two, Joseph Barsabas and Matthias, and prayed thus: "Lord, show whether of these two *Thou* hast chosen." St. Paul makes no exception to his statement that "neither doth any man take the honor to himself, but he that is *called by God*, as Aaron was."

The necessity of a divine vocation for the priesthood is evident from the heavy burden which the holy ministry imposes, and which cannot be borne without supernatural, divine assistance. The dangers, too, of the priesthood are so grave and numerous that they can be overcome only by special, divine protection.

God lends this assistance and protection to those alone whom He has chosen; He endows them with the inclination and ability requisite for a cheerful and successful ministry. To enter upon the ministry without a vocation is dangerous for time and eternity. A mistaken vocation is in every case a source of misery, remorse, and great danger, but it is especially so in the case of a priest. He is generally not inclined or adapted,

even by nature, to the functions of his state. He has departed from the divinely appointed order, and in the mystic body of the Church is similar to a disjointed member of a physical body, which is still capable of doing some service, but not without pain to itself and other members. The labors of the ministry, which are a source of joy and consolation for others, are full of sadness and disappointment for him. His labors can neither be acceptable to God nor blessed by Him, and he jeopardizes not only his own salvation, but the salvation of many others. The Roman Catechism says of such "intruders that they bring the greatest misery on themselves and the heaviest calamities on the Church of God; that they not only tarnish the lustre and degrade the dignity of the sacerdotal character in the eyes of the faithful, but the priesthood brings to them in its train the same rewards which the apostleship brought to Judas—eternal perdition."

Yet even he who has entered the priesthood without vocation must not despair. His disobedience renders his salvation difficult, but not impossible. "*Si non vocatus es, fac ut voceris!*" Contrition for the sacrilegious step, correction of the faults of the past, and earnest prayer for divine assistance are the saving means for one in his position. On the other hand, he that is called may nevertheless be lost, as the case of Judas shows. Not vocation alone, but a life corresponding to the vocation will establish securely the salvation of the priest.

It is necessary then above all things to discern this vocation, to examine carefully the marks by which it is recognized, and, after entering the ministry, to strive incessantly to perfect the necessary qualities.

This divine vocation to the priesthood is manifested by internal and by external signs. Internal signs are such

as are found in the natural character and qualities—inclination, ability, etc. External marks are those which the Church requires by positive law, and the absence of which she stamps as irregularities.

B. Interior Marks of Vocation.—Divine Providence, in calling any one to a certain state of life, endows him at the same time with a natural inclination for that state, and the necessary ability for fulfilling its duties. The absence of such inclination and ability then indicates with certainty the lack of vocation, whilst their possession is a guarantee for the vocation in proportion to the purity of the inclination and the extent of the ability.

If any one, therefore, is indifferent to the priesthood, or even despises its dignity; if he manifests a disinclination or disgust for celibacy, prayer, divine service, retirement, theological studies, and the functions of a priestly life; if he prefers profane occupations and the pleasures of the world, he proves thereby that he is not called by God. If he nevertheless enters the ministry, it can only be from impure motives, such as avarice, love of comfort, honor, and the like. On the other hand, he who bears the marks of divine vocation esteems the state and functions of the priest, feels himself attracted to the divine service, a life of virginity, prayer, retirement, theological studies, and is determined to seek in the ministry only the honor of God, the service of his divine Master, and the salvation of souls. A genuine inclination for the priesthood and a pure intention are evident, especially, from an earnest effort to develop the God-given talents and faculties, and to qualify one's self more and more for the proper performance of priestly duty.

Among the qualities requisite for the priesthood are knowledge, piety, and prudence. Knowledge corresponds in particular to the teaching, piety to the priestly

office, and prudence to the royal or pastoral functions. The inseparable connection of this threefold office in the Church necessitates the union of these three qualities in the minister. As the priesthood is the greatest of these three offices,—the living and fructifying principle of the other two,—so piety is the life and soul of knowledge and prudence. “Knowledge without piety puffeth up,” and prudence without piety is the “prudence of the flesh, which is death.” These three qualities must therefore be the combined object of the desire and effort of the minister.

7. Knowledge.—True pastoral knowledge, which is enlivened by piety and guided by prudence, is the light that illumines the path of the spiritual shepherd and of his flock.

This knowledge has ever been held by the Church to be the indispensable condition for a fruitful ministry. Holy Scripture emphatically demands it: “The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth.” The third Lateran Council (1179) ordains that “no one shall enter upon pastoral duty who is not commendable for knowledge and good morals.” The canons of the *Corpus Juris* designate “ignorance as the mother of errors, which ought to be shunned especially by priests who have undertaken to teach the faithful;” they decree “severe punishments for the bishop as well as the clerics, in cases where ignorant and uneducated persons are ordained to the ministry, for it is better,” say they, “that there should be few and good priests than many and bad ones, since if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit.” In strict accordance with these are the sayings of the holy Fathers, for example of Gregory the Great: “No man undertakes to teach an art unless he has himself first acquired it by diligent effort. It is therefore outra-

geous presumption if inexperienced ministers assume pastoral duties, because the direction of souls is the art of all arts."

The very nature of pastoral duty argues the necessity of knowledge, for the pastor must be the teacher, judge, counsellor, leader, and spiritual physician of his congregation. But without knowledge he will be an ignorant teacher, physician, and judge; an unenlightened counsellor, a blind leader, and his flock will be in imminent peril of eternal ruin. The results are equally disastrous for the entire Church. History teaches that the decay of faith and morals in ancient and modern times was due in great measure to a decline of knowledge among the clergy. Whenever ignorance prevailed among the clergy, heresies were most rampant. Lack of knowledge is the ruin of the priest himself. It renders him unfit for his duties, negligent in his functions, exposes him to the contempt and distrust of his flock, and distresses his conscience on account of the many and often irreparable blunders which he commits. St. Alphonsus Liguori maintains "that the confessor who dares to hear confessions without the necessary knowledge is in a state of damnation."

On the other hand, the love of knowledge and constant study is the guardian angel of the priest, qualifies him ever more for his duties, inspires him with courage and holy enthusiasm for his sacred office, gains for him the respect of his people and consequent influence with them, and fills his heart with peace and joy.

8. Pastoral Piety is the sum and perfection of all the virtues that ought to adorn the minister.

True piety must be the first and principal aim of the priest. If he would be a successful teacher, preach the word of God with power and without respect of persons, admonish, correct, and punish others without

having to blush at his own sins; if he would administer holy things holily, perform his priestly functions without sacrilege; if he would be a true guardian and safe guide for others, persevere in his labor amid contradictions and obstacles, and offer himself for his flock, as did Christ the Good Shepherd: he must possess a pure conscience, and strong, true, and tried virtue. Virtue and moral perfection secure for him authority and influence over the hearts of his flock, win their respect, love, and confidence, and greatly assist him in all his labor. Finally, his example will produce a great effect on the lives of those committed to his charge. His irreproachable, pious life is a model and powerful incentive to virtue; whereas the sinful life of the pastor is a public scandal and the ruin of the people. The power of example is far greater than that of words. The Apostle exhorts Timothy: "Be thou an example of the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity." The holy Council of Trent declares (Sess. xxii. De Ref. c. i.) "there is nothing that continually instructs others unto piety and the service of God more than the life and example of those who have dedicated themselves to the divine ministry. For as they are seen to be raised to a higher position, above the things of this world, others fix their eyes upon them as upon a mirror, and learn from them what they are to imitate. Wherefore, clerics called to have the Lord for their portion ought by all means so to regulate their whole life and conduct, that in their dress, comportment, gait, discourse, and all things else, nothing appear but what is grave, regulated, and replete with religiousness; avoiding even slight faults, which in them would be most grievous, that so their actions may impress all with veneration."

In order then to satisfy this requirement of the Church, and to accomplish the end of pastoral life, the

minister must be free, not only from all guilt, even from the very shadow of suspicion, but he must, moreover, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, "be perfect in every virtue."

9. Pastoral Zeal is that holy enthusiasm and self-sacrificing activity for the salvation of men which proceeds from a pure and ardent love of Christ and of immortal souls.

This zeal is the soul and the life-giving principle of all pastoral labor; it is at bottom the fulness of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the fulness of charity. Without it the pastor is an unfit instrument for the continuation of the work of redemption, which is above all others a work of the merciful, self-sacrificing love of God. When Christ appointed St. Peter supreme pastor, He required of him only this charity, but required it three times, and each time in a higher degree. This charity is the essence of the apostolic spirit, the spirit of Christ, the Good Shepherd, and it alone supplies that constant, cheerful courage and strength necessary to offer one's self for the honor of God and the welfare of the faithful by a zealous performance of all pastoral duties. The motive that always influenced St. Paul is the constant incentive by which the zealous pastor is actuated: "The charity of Christ presseth us."

The lukewarm pastor will do no more than his absolute duty; he looks upon his office and its functions as a troublesome burden, and whenever an occasion presents itself that requires laborious effort, self-denial, sacrifice, his invariable excuse is: "I am not obliged to this." Such a pastor will, under the cloak of an exteriorly proper life, perform the most sublime and important functions of the ministry in a cold, perfunctory, and indifferent manner; he is perfectly content with having fulfilled the letter of the law and escaped possi-

ble blame and censure; but he will know nothing of a real *care* of souls.

The pastor must be governed not by compulsion, but by charity; and the love of Christ living and working within him will urge him to do all in his power for the salvation of even a single soul.

This zeal, which urges the pastor to "become all things to all men to gain all for Christ," is not a blind, passionate fanaticism, but possesses those characteristics most subservient to the end, which we may comprehend under the four cardinal virtues: justice, temperance, fortitude, and prudence.

The most zealous activity will be productive of good only when kept within the bounds of *justice*. This quality manifests itself towards superiors in respect for all legitimate authority and obedience to its laws and ordinances. Destitute of this quality, zeal is but rebellion, and its source is not charity, but self-love. Towards equals a just zeal is not presumptuous, not unduly forward, but is satisfied to labor within the sphere assigned to it by God and by superiors. To inferiors justice accords the full measure of this zeal duly and impartially, without undue preference on the one side or prejudice and neglect on the other. The pastor whose zeal is just is equally accessible and affable, equally mild or severe, equally solicitous and active for the rich and the poor; for adult and youth; the virtuous and the wicked; friend and enemy; high and low; master and servant; man and woman. He is partial in the measure of his zeal only to greater necessity.

To be efficient this zeal must be characterized likewise by *moderation*, as well in official functions as in private life. A temperate zeal will prevent passion and violence from entering into any official act of the pastor; for passion debases and destroys the holiest ends,

provokes passion, and is ever an indication of weakness; whilst true strength shows in all things an unvarying, even-tempered manner.

Moderation and mildness are necessary, especially in dealing with subjects, enemies, or sinners; amid persecution and contradiction; for public censure in the pulpit, and still more for private correction in or out of the confessional. "A servant of the Lord," says the Apostle, "must not wrangle, but be mild towards all men, with modesty admonishing them that resist the truth." This mildness and meekness, which characterize true pastoral zeal, must not be mistaken for a natural, effeminate sentimentality, or for mere external gentleness, dictated by courtesy or human respect: it consists rather in an interior self-control, acquired with the grace of God by acts of charity, self-denial, and humility. Such moderation and meekness are entirely consistent with zeal, and exclude only passion and bitterness. "A pastor's charity," says St. Bernard, "is like to a good mother; kind in reproving a fault, gentle in dressing a wound, patient in anger, humble in indignation."

The private life of the priest should be equally calculated to glorify God, edify the people, and draw them to Christ. To that end it must likewise show moderation and temperance in all things, giving, as the Apostle says, "no offence to any man, that our ministry be not blamed." A pastor, therefore, who is actuated by this temperate zeal will avoid all extravagance in his table, dress, and recreation; he will practise strict sobriety, dress in a clerical style, and never take part, not only in sinful and dangerous entertainments, but even such as are very noisy and unbecoming a clergyman.¹ He will keep aloof from all female society that might

¹ Cf. III. Conc. Plen. Balt.

become dangerous to him, or even expose him to suspicion. In mien and gesture, in word and conduct he will be ever mindful of his state, not less kind and pleasant than staid and sober, equally removed from severity and from frivolity.

Moderation and mildness do not exclude the quality of *fortitude* which all true zeal must possess. Fortitude is required to fulfil courageously all the duties of the ministry; to be intimidated neither by interior nor exterior difficulties, neither by temptations nor by persecution. The pastor who possesses this quality will be neither puffed up by honor, praise, reward, or success, nor grow discouraged and despondent at actual or imaginary failures; he will not grow weary in following with unwavering perseverance the end marked out, and will "bring forth fruit in patience."

The contrast of this fortitude of the zealous pastor is presented by the ill-timed obsequiousness and weakness of the hireling, whose only ambition is peace,—undisturbed at any cost,—and who will frequently out of human fear or respect neglect the most important functions. On the other hand, the pastor possessed of fortitude will not avoid difficulties in the way of his duty, but will enter into an unavoidable combat confident in God and independent of human respect or external influence; he will give testimony to the truth and, come what may, live and labor for Christ and His Church. "The apostles went from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus."

Fortitude—earnestness and perseverance in zeal for souls—excludes, however, no less all rash impetuosity and stubborn persistence than it excludes cowardly weakness and want of character.

To be able to find the right mean between weak-

ness and vacillation on the one hand, and impetuosity on the other, another quality is necessary, namely, "the wisdom that is from above"—true pastoral prudence.

10. Pastoral Prudence may be described as the facility of taking into consideration and utilizing all circumstances, relations, and means at hand, and adapting them to the furtherance of the end of pastoral life. It is most conspicuous in difficult cases.

This ready ability of the mind, however, to discern and carry out what is conducive to the honor of God and the salvation of souls—which is the end of the pastoral office—is not acquired without the light and strength of the Holy Ghost. As it is He who directs the entire Church of God in communicating to mankind the fruits of redemption, so His direction alone qualifies the individual organs of the Church to apply to individual men and congregations the graces of redemption. The essence of true pastoral prudence is therefore supernatural light and strength, the efficiency of the Holy Ghost in and through the pastor for the glory of God and the sanctification of individual men and congregations.

The very nature of this quality proves its necessity for pastoral life. This necessity is furthermore evident from the words of Holy Scripture and of the fathers and doctors of the Church.

True pastoral prudence cannot be acquired through theoretical instruction. It must, since its very nature lies in the efficacy of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, be obtained by prayer, and, in actual pastoral life, by one's own and others' experience, and by profiting by one's own faults and those of others, by temptation and trial, by constant study of men and motives. A theoretical pastoral instruction can point out only

the general principles and characteristics of pastoral prudence.

The first of these are a pure intention and a holy aim. The latter may embrace not only the ultimate end of all pastoral activity, but also the subordinate ends conducive to the ultimate, as, for instance, the confidence, love, and respect of parishioners; not, however, vain ambition, thirst for popularity, temporal gain, and the like. Another characteristic is the employment of legitimate and proper means for the attainment of these ends. Among such means those assigned by Christ Himself, of course, take first rank—doctrine, divine worship, ecclesiastical discipline, prayer, and edifying example. Next come those means suggested by the spirit and legislation of the Church, whose directions are inspired by the Holy Ghost and guided by the experience of nearly twenty centuries; such means are missions, confraternities, particular devotions, and the like. Essentially contrary to this holy pastoral prudence are all means not in themselves legitimate: such as falsehood, hypocrisy, etc. Finally, this prudence is marked by a careful consideration of all circumstances—time, place, persons—unfavorable as well as favorable, harmful as well as useful; circumstances that render an action or an undertaking possible, necessary, etc.

An accurate knowledge, therefore, of surrounding conditions and circumstances, of available means, of difficulties and possible or actual opposition, etc., is an essential prerequisite for prudent pastoral action, and to obtain such knowledge is the duty of the pastor.

The supreme and invariable rule of pastoral prudence is to attempt always only that which is possible, and among the things possible those which are most necessary and universally useful and salutary; to prepare

the way gradually, when the object itself is not yet attainable; to be content with what is good if what is best is impossible, but to strive continually and perseveringly for the best; to await patiently favorable circumstances, or to endeavor to bring them about and utilize them for pastoral ends.

The prudent pastor therefore first quietly and prayerfully deliberates upon every undertaking; consults, as far as possible, prudent advisers; compares the past, present, future, the end, means, obstacles, and results; asks himself before every undertaking: "What would other godfearing priests, holy men, the apostles, the Supreme Pastor, do in this case? What shall I wish on my death-bed to have done?" Having arrived at his decision, he, with confidence in God, promptly but not rashly, quietly, and unostentatiously proceeds to carry out his resolve, meanwhile often directing his mind to God, neither intimidated nor unduly excited by obstacles, ever keeping the final end in view, and not wavering or desisting, unless circumstances should essentially change. After his work he humbles himself, begs pardon for any faults committed, and attributes the good success to God and any ill-success to himself; he never delights in any praise accorded him, for fear that he may lose the fruits of his labor, but preserves his equanimity, even if the desired and expected results should not appear; he rejoices if others are more successful in their labors, and he himself rests content with God's approval.

The prudent pastor is especially careful about making innovations; he will introduce reforms only after well informing himself of the condition and circumstances of his people, and after long and deep deliberation. He will not, merely out of a desire for novelty, abrogate local customs and practices that do not

offend against the laws of God or the Church; his ambition is not to tear down what is already built up, but to build up on the foundations already laid.

A prudent pastoral zeal is directed against sin, not against the sinner; against error, but not against the erring, as the Church prays not for the extirpation of heretics, but for the extirpation of heresies. Such a zeal when necessary "suffers the cockle to grow lest it root up the wheat together with it." On the one hand, the prudent pastor "does not quench the smoking flax nor break the bruised reed," but fans the glowing coal, and nourishes every shooting germ wherever he notices it. On the other hand, he does not fear pharisaic, pretended scandal, and is not deterred by it from going on with the work of reform in his congregation, which he has begun with God; he knows no other precept but to suffer, labor, and pray like Our Lord. It is therefore equally against pastoral prudence like a blind watchman never to see anything wrong, or like a dumb dog to connive by silence at manifest abuses and wrongs, as it is indiscriminately to cry reform; always to suspect evil; to rush precipitately without deliberation and moderation into various schemes and undertakings; to break and crush all that will not bend; to seek to accommodate the good and the wicked alike, to profess strict Catholicity and at the same time to compromise Catholic truth and principle; to yield more or less to the evil spirit of the age in its attacks upon Christianity, the Catholic Church, her spirit and life, etc. Pastoral prudence is not human respect or a catering to human favor, not love of comfort or fear of trouble and sacrifice; it is not the spirit of the world, but the efficiency of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of fortitude, of knowledge, of piety, of the fear of the Lord.

11. Exterior Marks of Vocation.—The first exterior mark of divine vocation for any office or condition in life is natural talent and inclination. The difficulty, however, of discerning divine vocation by talent and inclination increases with the importance of the office and dignity in question. Human talent grows more inadequate in proportion to the sublime character of the office, and the motive of an inclination for such office becomes more open to suspicion. Divine wisdom has therefore rendered such discernment more reliable and secure—especially for the priestly and pastoral state—partly by the command of superiors, partly by enlightening those upon whom the duty of such discernment devolves, partly, again, by resting the decision not with the individual, but with His Church; at times even by direct revelation or wonderful signs.

Besides the interior call of God the exterior call of the Church is necessary for the priesthood. As the interior vocation is not sufficient without the exterior, so the exterior call of the Church is not always of itself a sufficient proof of the interior call of God. Hence the Church, before she consecrates and admits any one to enter upon and practise the ecclesiastical ministry, examines whether he is also called thereto by God.

The Church excludes from her priesthood the entire female sex and all non-baptized persons—these latter for the sufficient reason that they are not of her fold. She does not however admit indiscriminately all baptized male persons; but, guided by the principles of the Old Law (Lev. xxi. 17 and fol.) and by the pastoral letters of St. Paul (1 Tim. iii. 2 and fol.; Tit. i. 6 and fol.), she requires other necessary qualities, the absence of which she designates as irregularities, *i. e.*, as impediments to entering the state of the priesthood. By the laws of the Church, those are disqualified to enter the

priesthood who lack the *natural* ability to govern others, who are under age, weak or deformed in body, who labor under defects of the mind—weak faith, heresy, illiteracy; furthermore, those who are under a *moral* stain—loss of character, infamia, illegitimacy, lack of meekness; finally, those whose defects are of a religious nature—bigamy, guilt incurred in the reception of baptism or the reception or exercise of an order.

The requirements of the Church increase in proportion to the dignity of the office. The Church especially insists that those who take upon themselves the pastoral office should be eminently fitted and worthy, and should be educated for the proper and efficient performance of its duties, and that this cultivation of natural and moral qualities shall continue even after the reception of Holy Orders.

12. Necessity of Education for the Pastoral Office and of Continued Study after Ordination.—Good pastors are not born, but must be educated.¹ This education must begin in early youth, for “a young man accustomed to his way, even when he is old will not part from it.” Hence the Church ordained in the Council of Trent² that “all cathedral and metropolitan churches shall be bound to maintain, to educate religiously, and to train in ecclesiastical discipline a certain number of youths in a college. Into this college shall be received those whose character and inclination afford a hope that they will always serve in the ecclesiastical ministry. . . . The bishop, having divided these youths into as many classes as he shall think fit, according to their number, age, and progress in ecclesiastical discipline, shall, when it seems expedient to him, assign some of them to the ministry of the churches. . . and shall supply the

¹ Benedict XIV., encyclical 3 Dec., 1740.

² Sess. xxiii., c. 18, de Ref.

places of those who have been withdrawn by others; that so this college may be a perpetual seminary of ministers of God."

The education received in the seminary preparatory to the ministry must be continued in the ministry itself, if the fruits of the seminary education are to be preserved and increased. For the holy fathers unanimously teach that "in order not to retrograde, we must constantly strive forward; as soon as we begin to stand still we are on the decline, and not to advance is to recede." Disorders among the clergy and in the sacred ministry may be traced generally, not so much to a defective training in the seminary as to a lack of continued self-training in pastoral life, and the sad spectacle occasionally witnessed of young priests who gave the brightest promise during their seminary course falling into negligence and tepidity soon after entering the ministry, even to the extent of grave scandal, can only be explained from a neglect to preserve and cultivate those qualities and virtues so necessary to the priest for the attainment of the ends of pastoral life.

13. Purpose of this Continued Study after Ordination.—The end of all education and training of the priest can be no other than the end of all pastoral life—personal sanctification and the salvation of souls. The pastor cannot promote his own sanctification if he neglect the care of his charge; and on the other hand, a successful pastoral administration is impossible without striving after personal perfection. The perfection of the priest consists in his progress in true knowledge, especially theological knowledge, and in true piety. Hence only that priest progresses in self-perfection who combines its three elements by an orderly, equal cultivation of learning, ascetics, and practical experience.

14. The Means of Intellectual Training is diligent and

methodical study. "God is a God of knowledge and the Father of lights." He grants every one the necessary knowledge, but only in the proper order, *i. e.*, not without diligent use of the necessary means. The first of these means is prayer. "If any of you want wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men abundantly." Knowledge is a free gift of God. "If it shall please the great Lord, He will fill him with the spirit of understanding." The example of St. Thomas Aquinas and so many other holy doctors attests the value of prayer for obtaining knowledge. The second means is rectitude of life. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and "wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins." Our Lord repeatedly points out obedience to His law as a necessary condition for knowledge. (John vii. 17; viii. 12.) All study must be prompted and guided by a proper motive: namely, to use knowledge itself as a means to confirm the love of God in ourselves and others.

Whilst the above are the subjective necessary dispositions, the objective means for obtaining knowledge are hearing, reading, and reflection. The first road to knowledge is that of authority, diffidence of one's own opinion, and submission to the teaching of others. Knowledge as well as faith comes from hearing, and "a wise man shall hear and be wiser." Hence self-conceit and contempt for the judgment of others not only impede supernatural enlightenment, but also obscure the natural understanding. In *reading* all depends upon the selection of matter. Especially in theology and ascetics approved authors only should be read. Indiscriminate reading, especially of works of fiction and of works dangerous to faith and morals, ought to be carefully avoided. Reading will be profitable only when carefully and well digested by study and reflection.

Study must at the same time be well ordered; hence the pastor must study soberly and methodically. The first is inculcated by St. Paul: "Not to be more wise than it behooveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety." Every science is certainly in itself good and desirable, and may be made to subserve theology. But any one man is incapable of appropriating all science, and must therefore make a selection of the subject-matter of his study, according to his special vocation and his personal abilities. The *proper method* of study is pointed out by St. Bernard¹ when he requires us to study in the right order, with a becoming degree of zeal and with a proper motive.

The right order of things requires us to take up that first which is most necessary for salvation. The knowledge of God, of one's own self, and of the duties of one's station of life must precede all other knowledge. It must accompany and penetrate every other study, and must yield to none. It is a disastrous practice for the pastor to neglect his interior life, prayer, and devout exercises, for the sake of study. This proper order forbids likewise that we be drawn away by favorite studies from those especially necessary in our vocation. Philology, Philosophy, Civil Law, the natural sciences, Literature, and the like must ever be for the pastor only as means and handmaids of the higher studies: Dogma, Morals, Exegesis, etc.

This study must likewise be prosecuted with the proper zeal. Zealous and diligent study not only qualifies the pastor ever more and more for his duties, but it closes the door of the heart against many dangers, and keeps the mind directed to higher and nobler things. This zeal, of course, must not be immoderate; it must never lessen the spirit of devotion or cause the

¹ In Cant. C., s. 35.

neglect of any duty. It must be graded according to the absolute and relative value of the science. Hence a greater zeal, for instance, is required for the sacred than for the profane sciences. Finally, a proper motive is essential to study. St. Bernard asks: "What is the end of all study? Not vanity, curiosity, but self-edification and the edification of others. There are some who wish to learn merely for the sake of learning, and that is disgraceful curiosity. There are others who wish to know in order to be known, and that is shameful vanity. There are others again who wish to know in order to sell their knowledge for money or honors, and this is contemptible greed. There are others, however, who wish to learn in order to edify, and this is charity. Others again wish to learn in order to be edified, and this is prudence."

15. Means of Ascetical Training.—The pastor must himself walk in the ways of the spiritual life, in which he is to lead his flock, and must therefore earnestly strive after his own sanctification. The principal means for this end are:

Prayer.—The duty of prayer is greater for the priest than for the layman because of the greater holiness of his state, its greater duties, and its more numerous and serious dangers. Prayer is the proper element of the spiritual life, and love of prayer is a prominent characteristic of a good priest. Without the spirit of prayer the pastor is like salt that has lost its savor, a bird without wings, a fish out of its element, a flame without fuel, or, as St. Jude says (v. 12.), "a cloud without water."

There are especially two kinds of prayer, one of which is a duty the other a necessity for the pastor: viz., the Breviary and meditation. The Breviary is enjoined upon the pastor not only for his own benefit,

but for that of the entire Church, and of his flock in particular. The priest is the mediator between God and the people, and the prayer of the Breviary is a channel through which the grace of God flows out upon the faithful. He that omits this prayer closes this channel, and deprives the faithful of many graces they would otherwise receive.

Meditation may be called, according to the unanimous testimony of all spiritual writers, a *conditio sine qua non* for all priestly and pastoral life. St. Francis of Sales says it is an indispensable necessity for every priest to devote each day some time to meditation. It is the soul of the sacred ministry, and so essential that without it pastors will never be able to fulfil all their duties towards God and towards their charges. The daily practice of meditation will continually nourish the zeal of the pastor, will introduce him ever more and more into the spirit of his vocation, will prevent him from remaining in sin, will fill him with consolation, joy, and peace.

A practice intimately allied to prayer is spiritual reading. "In prayer," says St. Augustine, "we speak to God; in spiritual reading God speaks to us." Spiritual reading is necessary to no one so much as to the director of souls. He watches over others, he instructs, he admonishes; but no one instructs him, no one corrects him. If then the living conceal truth from him, let him apply to the dead by reading edifying authors, especially those that treat of the duties of the ministry.

Another exercise closely connected with the foregoing is the daily examination of conscience. It leads to a knowledge of one's own heart, and hence, also, to the knowledge of men, which is so necessary to the pastor. This knowledge is a protection against vain self-esteem, the most dangerous of all evils. No won-

der, then, that this practice is pointed out by spiritual writers as one of the most efficacious means for the acquisition and preservation of virtue. A consequence of daily meditation and examen of conscience will be frequent confession, which is of greater necessity to the priest than to the layman. For the daily offering of the Holy Sacrifice requires purity of conscience, and the faithful performance of his duties requires great light and strength. Another motive that should induce him to go to confession once a week is the gaining of so many indulgences dependent upon this condition.

The daily visit of the Blessed Sacrament is especially becoming to the priest. In daily communion with the Supreme Pastor the pastor of souls will obtain that light, strength, grace, and charity so essential if he would "gain all for Christ."

Another effectual means of sanctification of one's self and others is devotion to the ever-blessed Virgin. As she took a special part in the redemption of mankind, so she does likewise in the communication of this redemption to every individual. She, the "Queen of the apostles," is found in the midst of the apostles, praying with and for them for the descent of the Holy Ghost.

All these exercises are practicable only when the pastor observes a daily rule of life. Occasionally it may be impossible to observe the rule, but ordinarily it must regulate the interior and exterior life of the pastor, and when from necessity he deviates from it in one instance or for a short while, he should resume it as soon as possible.

Finally, the spiritual retreat, annual, or at least, biennial, is a great means of sanctification. Pope Pius IX., in his encyclical of the 9th of Nov., 1846, earnestly

recommends the retreat as an excellent means for upholding the dignity and sanctity of the sacerdotal state. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore quotes this encyclical, and adds: "We therefore decree that the bishops institute every year, or at least every second year, such a retreat for the clergy of their diocese, that, renovated in mind and heart, and receiving more abundant graces from God, they return to a more fruitful discharge of the sacred ministry."

16. Means of Practical Pastoral Training. Pastoral Conferences.—A pastoral conference is a meeting of the pastors of a certain district for the promotion of ecclesiastical learning, of interior, spiritual life, and for consulting upon subjects connected with their pastoral charge. The object of pastoral conferences is better to qualify the individual pastor for his duty by furnishing him with means for perfecting himself in knowledge and piety. This object introduces a threefold element into conferences: a scientific, ascetical, and practical pastoral element. Piety is the basis, science the means, and pastoral practice the end of all pastoral conferences. The spirit of piety pervading the conferences will alone maintain them in their proper character and dignity, prevent abuses, restrain human passion, and preserve the necessary zeal and interest. As piety is the soul, so sacred science is the light of pastoral conferences. This science, however, can be attained and preserved only by continual study. Pastoral conferences are a constant stimulus to such study and cultivation of knowledge. But since sacred science itself is only a means for a higher end,—“edification of one’s own self and of one’s neighbor,”—and since all pastoral duties have for their object the care of souls, the knowledge cultivated in these conferences must be adapted to this end.

The method of holding these conferences is indicated

in detail by the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. (Tit. V. C. 5.) "The Bishop shall, in a carefully compiled annual schema, propose for these conferences such questions from the various branches of theology as specially pertain to the care of souls. The 'Conscience Case' shall be discussed in writing by all that attend. The names of two shall be drawn by lot, and these shall read their papers and orally discuss the case. Other questions from the Sacred Scripture, Dogmatic Theology, Canon Law, and Sacred Liturgy shall be discussed by those who have been appointed thereto in the previous conference. Let the priests often be reminded of the words of St. Paul: 'Take heed to thyself and to doctrine. For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.'"

ART. III.

THE SUPERNATURAL QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTOR BY MEANS OF HOLY ORDERS.

17. Necessity of Holy Orders, their Degrees, the Preparation for Receiving them.—Natural qualification does not communicate supernatural power for any, much less for the priestly office. This is given by God in a supernatural manner through Holy Orders. Holy Orders are the root and source of all pastoral power, not only of the strictly priestly, but also of the teaching and governing power. The Church therefore has ever required the reception of Holy Orders for this threefold power.

The priesthood has two degrees, the episcopal and the priestly. The episcopal degree ranks the recipient among the *sacerdotes primi ordinis* and confers in *radice* the highest magisterial, sacerdotal, and pastoral power under the Primacy. The priestly degree confers *radicitus* the power to exercise, subordinately to the

bishop and to a limited extent, this threefold power. The limitations affect: *a.* The teaching office; as the simple priest does not belong to the infallible apostolic magisterium, and teaches only in the name of the bishop. *b.* The sacerdotal office; since the priest cannot dispense the sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Orders, nor perform some of the other liturgical functions—consecration of churches, altars, and the like. *c.* The royal or pastoral office; since the priest does not belong to the hierarchy of jurisdiction, *i. e.*, possesses no legislative, judicial authority, but is the organ of the bishop and participant in the pastoral office.

As the priesthood (*sacerdotium*), so the subordinate ministry (*ministerium*) has various degrees: Deaconship, Subdeaconship, and the four minor orders of Acolytes, Exorcists, Readers, and Porters.

Every degree of Holy Orders confers a certain power together with the grace necessary for its proper exercise. These powers and graces increase in dignity and excellence in proportion to the dignity of the respective order.

Corresponding to this power and grace must be the disposition and life of the recipient and the immediate preparation for its reception. Hence the Church ordains that certain interstices of time shall intervene in order that the candidate may be well instructed concerning the individual order, well grounded in the corresponding degree of virtue, and “ascend from degree to degree” growing constantly in knowledge and piety. The disposition and sentiments proximately required for the reception of each order the Church endeavors to instil by previous spiritual retreats, by prayers and fasts (Ember days), and by the particular rite of the order.

The rite of Ordination is admirably adapted to this

purpose. Words, symbols, and ceremonies instruct the recipient of the order concerning its dignity and duties and the requisite disposition of his mind and heart. The sacred instruments and vessels presented symbolize the power communicated, the sacred vestments the knowledge and virtue required. The prayers and blessings transmit the corresponding grace, and the exhortations of the bishop inculcate the necessity of co-operating with this grace. The rite of Ordination grows in solemnity and significance with the dignity of the order and the grave character of the responsibilities.

The Tonsure is the ecclesiastical preparation for the reception of any order.

18. The First Tonsure.—Isidore of Seville ¹ traces the practice of tonsure back to the Nazarites of the Old Law, who were ordered to have their hair shaven and to lay it upon the sacrificial fire in token of their perfect consecration to God. The type of ecclesiastical tonsure is found in the ordination of the Levites of the Old Law, as ordered by Moses. (Numbers, ch. viii.) From the monks, who practised it as a sign of humility and contempt for the world, the tonsure passed over to the clerics in the fifth century, and at the time of St. Gregory the Great we see it sanctioned by ecclesiastical law.

The tonsure is not an order, and confers no ecclesiastical office or power. It is the act of receiving the layman into the clerical state, and on the part of the recipient the consecration of himself to the special service of God. It consists of two parts: the cutting of the hair and the vesting with the surplice. The first signifies the renunciation of the world, the second the entrance into the ecclesiastical state.

Before giving the tonsure the bishop beseeches Our

¹ De Officiis Eccles., l. 2, c. 4.

Lord to "bestow upon the youthful clerics the Holy Ghost, who shall preserve them in the practice of a religious life, protect their hearts from the evil ways of the world, grant them an increase of virtue, deliver them from all spiritual and human blindness, and give them the light of eternal grace."

The bishop then cuts some hair from the head of the tonsurand in five places: viz., from the forehead, from the back of the head, from each side, and from the crown of the head, observing thus the form of the cross. The hair signifies the world and its vanities which the cleric renounces. The cutting in the form of the cross signifies the cross of self-denial which the cleric thereby takes upon himself. The tonsurand himself gives expression to this sentiment by reciting during the ceremony the words of the Psalmist: "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup; it is Thou that wilt restore my inheritance to me." The blessing of God consequent upon his sacrifice is indicated by the antiphon and the twenty-third psalm then chanted.

The investing with the surplice is introduced by the prayer that "with God's aid the clerics may remain always devout in His Church, and receive eternal life."

The surplice is put on with the words: "May the Lord put on thee the new man, who according to God is created in justice and in the holiness of truth." After this the bishop again implores God to "release these His servants from every bond of worldly dress, and that while they put off the ignominy of a worldly garment, they may enjoy His grace forever."

The parting admonition is as pregnant in thought as it is concise in form. "Dearest children, you ought to consider that to-day you have come under the jurisdiction of the Church, and have obtained the privileges of clerics. Take care lest you lose them on account of

your faults, and by a becoming exterior, good morals and works, endeavor to please God. Which may He grant you through His Holy Spirit. Amen."

The "becoming exterior" includes the wearing of the clerical dress, and in countries where that is customary, of clerical tonsure. The "privileges of clerics" are: The "*Privilegium Fori*," in virtue of which they are in certain matters exempted from appearing before a civil tribunal; the "*Privilegium Canonis*," which renders those who gravely and unjustly assault them subject to excommunication reserved to the Pope; finally, clerics become capable of acquiring ecclesiastical jurisdiction. (For the particular conditions of these privileges, especially in this country, we must refer the reader to Canon Law.)

19. The Minor Orders in General.—In ancient times there was a special office connected with each of the Minor Orders. Though at present these offices may be filled by laymen, yet the orders have remained not only as a reminiscence of ancient ecclesiastical practice, but as a worthy preparation for the reception of Higher Orders.¹

The Council of Trent² exhorts that these functions be again connected with the orders, *i. e.*, that only clerics in Minor Orders perform these functions. This is certainly not practicable in most places; but the pastor should at least see that these functions of acolythes, sextons, etc., be performed in a worthy manner according to the laws of the Church.

The rite of the Minor Orders is very simple. The clerics are called by name by the archdeacon, and

¹ From the description of the fourth (?) Council of Carthage (398) we learn that the ceremonies for the Minor Orders were essentially the same then as they are now.

² Sess. XXIII., c. 17, de Ref.

kneel before the bishop, vested in surplice and holding each a lighted candle. The bishop first instructs them concerning the respective order; then, by giving them the instruments (matter) with appropriate words (form), transmits to them the power of the office, and finally in prayer implores for them the grace worthily to fulfil its duties.

20. The Ordination of Porters.—This order confers the office of caring for the dignity of the house of God and of maintaining order therein. During the early persecutions it was necessary to indicate to the faithful the time and place of divine service, and to keep the doors of the place of meeting locked against intruders. This was the duty of the “porters” and “messengers of God.” The duties of this office are pointed out by the bishop to be: “To strike the cymbal and ring the bell, to open the church and the sanctuary, and the book of him who preaches.” These duties are symbolic for the still higher duty “of closing to the devil and opening to God, by their word and example, the invisible house of God, namely, the hearts of the faithful.”

The matter of this order is the presenting of the keys of the church to the clerics to be touched by their right hand, and the form is the accompanying admonition: “Conduct yourselves as having to render an account to God for those things which are kept under these keys.”

The bishop then invites all present to pray with him “that these porters may be most diligent in their care of the house of God.”

Although the Ostiariate is no longer a distinct institution in the Church, still for that very reason every pastor ought to be a true ostiary, consumed with zeal for the house of God. He must love the church, frequently visit it, banish from it all uncleanness, disorder, and irreverence, procure decent vestments and ornaments, and

guard against the loss or profanation of anything consecrated to divine service. He must himself be punctual and urge others to punctuality in divine service.

Still greater care must he bestow on the "invisible house of God, the hearts of the faithful," that they may be closed to the devil and opened to the graces and blessings of God, promoting thus the interior service of God by word and deed.

21. The Ordination of Readers.—This order confers the office and the grace to read the Holy Scriptures to the assembled faithful. It is the most ancient of the Minor Orders, and may be traced back to apostolic times.

The rights of this office are, as the bishop says, "to read for him who preaches, to sing the Lessons, and to bless the bread and all the new fruits."

The order is conferred by presenting to the cleric the Sacred Scriptures (or the Breviary) to be touched with the right hand, saying at the same time the words: "Receive and be reader of the word of God, destined if you faithfully and usefully fulfil your office to have a part with those who from the beginning have acquitted themselves well in the ministry of the divine Word."

The duties which the office imposes are: "To announce distinctly and clearly the words of God in such a manner that the faithful may understand and be edified, and without any corruption of the text. And what you read with your lips, believe in your hearts and practise by your works, so that you may be able to teach by word and example. When you read, stand in a high place that you may be heard by all and be seen, exhibiting by your elevated position the necessity incumbent upon you of possessing virtue in an eminent degree, and presenting the model of a heavenly life to all those by whom you are heard and seen."

Every pastor will at once recognize the appropriateness of these practical exhortations for his advanced position in the ministry.

22. The Ordination of Exorcists.—This is the third of the Minor Orders, and it confers the power of casting out devils from the bodies of the possessed, be they of the faithful or catechumens. It is reckoned among the ecclesiastical orders even by St. Ignatius Martyr in his letter to the citizens of Antioch, by Pope St. Cornelius in his letter to Bishop Fabian, and by other ecclesiastical writers.

The office is described in the words of the ordaining bishop, "to cast out devils, to tell the people that he who does not communicate must give way to communicants, and to pour the water in the service."¹

The conferring of the order takes place by presenting to the cleric the book containing the exorcisms (Ritual, Pontifical, or Missal) with the words: "Take and commit it to memory, and have power to impose hands on persons possessed, be they baptized or catechumens."

The prayer which follows asks the blessing of God, "that these exorcists may be spiritual rulers for expelling devils, with all their multifiform wickedness, from the bodies of the possessed."

Whilst the reader exercises his office principally for catechumens, the exorcist is ordained also for the benefit of the faithful. The reader only reads the word of God, the exorcist invokes the name of God with authority. The former only teaches, the latter also exercises power.

This order can be exercised at present only by a priest with special authorization from the bishop, since

¹ During the administration of Baptism, or during Mass, for the washing of the priest's hands.

the Church has for various reasons withdrawn the jurisdiction originally granted to all exorcists.

The higher and personal duty of exorcists still remains: "To drive from their own minds and bodies all uncleanness and wickedness, lest they yield to those spirits whom by their ministry they drive away from others; to learn by their office to rule over their passions, so that the enemy may not be able to lay claim to anything as his own in their conduct."

23. The Ordination of Acolytes.—This order is of great antiquity in the Christian Church. During the persecutions the Christians held their services at night-time in subterraneous places called the catacombs. Hence lights were needed, and certain men were placed in charge of these lights, and called, "Ceroferarii, Candlebearers." After the persecutions this institution was preserved on account of the sublime meaning of light and its mystic connection with the Holy Sacrifice.

The office of the acolyte is "to carry the candlestick, to light the lamps and candles of the church, and to minister wine and water for the Eucharist."

The cleric touches with the right hand the candlestick with a candle not lighted, which the bishop presents with the words: "Receive this candlestick and candle, and know that you are obligated to light the lamps of the church in the name of the Lord." He then receives the empty cruet from the bishop, whilst the latter says: "Receive this cruet for supplying wine and water for the Eucharist of the Blood of Christ in the name of the Lord."

The duties of this office are well set forth in the admonition and in the three concluding prayers. The bishop exhorts the acolytes to fulfil worthily their office, "for," so he continues, "you will not be able to

please God if, carrying in your hands a light for Him, you serve the works of darkness.... In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation shine as lights in the world.... Be therefore solicitous in all justice, goodness, and truth to illumine yourself and others and the Church of God. For then will you worthily minister wine and water in the sacrifice of God when by a chaste life and good works you shall have offered yourselves as a sacrifice to God."

In the first of the three prayers he dwells on their ministry at the altar. In the second he refers to the types of acolythes in the Old Law—Moses and Aaron. In the third he beseeches God to "illumine their minds with the light of science, and water them with the dew of His piety, so that their ministry may be acceptable."

24. The Higher Orders.—These orders are called Higher Orders because of the greater and nobler ministry of the altar to which they introduce the cleric. They are called sacred because they confer the right to handle the sacred vessels, and because the recipients are consecrated to God by a perpetual solemn obligation of chastity.

Subdeaconship.—As the Minor Orders, so also the subdeaconship sprang from the diaconship, and is of most ancient origin. Mention is made of it in the letters of St. Cyprian († 258), in the councils of Elvira (305), Laodicea (361), Carthage (398), the Apostolic Constitutions, etc.

The principal functions of the subdeaconship were: assisting the deacon—as the name indicates—at Mass by presenting the chalice, paten, etc.; receiving the offerings from the hands of the faithful; reading the Epistle during Mass; transmitting messages during times of persecution. In the Greek Church subdeaconship is reckoned among the Minor Orders. Isi-

dore of Seville says that subdeacons were obliged to continency because they came in contact with the sacred vessels; and Gregory the Great forbade the ordination of any one who did not vow chastity.

The ordination of subdeacons takes place immediately before the Epistle, the reading of which is proper to this order. The names of the ordinands are called, and the title announced to which they are to be ordained. For as they are to serve the altar during their whole future life, the Church requires that their decent support be first provided for.

Vested in amice (which, however, they have not placed upon their head when putting it on), alb, and cincture, carrying in their left hand the maniple and on their left arm the tunic, and holding in their right hand a lighted candle, they *stand* before the bishop, indicating that they are still free. The bishop with touching earnestness exhorts them first "attentively to consider, again and again, what a burden they this day freely seek."

They then prostrate themselves on the floor in token of their entire consecration to God, whilst the bishop and the clergy implore the intercession of all the saints, that God may bless this sacrifice for the Church and for the candidates. Near the end of the Litany the bishop rises, and in full pontifical robes, with mitre on and crosier in hand, turns to the candidates, blesses them, and prays "that God vouchsafe to bless... to bless and sanctify... to bless, sanctify, and consecrate these elect." They are blessed in being separated from the world and raised above it; they are sanctified, *i. e.*, endowed with grace for the ministry; they are consecrated, *i. e.*, dedicated forever to God and the Church.

After the Litany the candidates kneel before the bishop, who explains to them the office of the subdeacon. "It is incumbent upon the subdeacon to prepare

water for the service of the altar; to wash the palls of the altar and the corporals, to assist the deacon and present him the chalice and paten used in the Sacrifice."

The bishop then presents to all an empty chalice, with a paten placed on it, to be touched by them with the right hand, and says: "See whose ministry is given to you; I admonish you, therefore, so to comport yourselves as to be pleasing to God." The archdeacon presents to them cruets with wine and water, and a basin, with finger-towel, to be touched in the same manner.

After having then implored upon them the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, the bishop draws the amice over the head of each, saying: "Receive this amice, by which is signified prudence in speech." Putting on the maniple, he says: "Receive this maniple, which signifies the fruit of good works." Putting on the tunic, he says: "May the Lord clothe thee with the tunic of sweetness and the garment of gladness." Lastly he presents to them the book of Epistles, to be touched by them, and says: "Receive this book of Epistles and have power to read them in the holy church of God both for the living and the dead."

As the subdeacon ascends to the altar and, though remotely, takes part in the Holy Sacrifice, the Church requires of him a perfect sacrifice. This must contain the two elements of every true sacrifice, the negative—that of self-renunciation in perpetual chastity; the positive—of consecrating all his days and hours to God through the prayer of the Breviary. He must be a "prompt and watchful sentinel of the heavenly army in the holy sanctuary; a faithful minister," in the state of divine grace (alb); devote his tongue to singing the praises of God (Div. Off. amice); labor and suffer for God (maniple); and care not only for the cleanliness of the palls and corporals, but purify by heavenly doc-

trine the members of Christ, the faithful who may suffer from the stain of sin, so that they may again be a worthy ornament of Christ.

25. Deaconship.—The deaconship is of divine institution, and possesses a sacramental character. The name deacon signifies minister, as the deacon ministers to the priest or bishop at the altar.

The ordination of deacons takes place after the Epistle is read. The candidates advance vested in amice, alb, cincture, and maniple, holding in their left hand the stole, on their left arm the dalmatic, and in their right hand a lighted candle. The archdeacon in the name of the Church asks the bishop to ordain these subdeacons to the burden of deaconship, and on the question of the bishop, testifies that they are worthy.

The bishop then announces to the clergy and the people that he chooses these subdeacons for the order of Deaconship, and requests "any one that may have anything against them to come forward confidently, and to speak before God and for the sake of God, but to be mindful of his own condition."¹

¹ The Third Council of Carthage (397) enacted that "no cleric should be ordained who had not been proved by the examination of the bishop and the testimony of the people." Afterwards the voice of the people was limited to raising necessary objection. The Council of Trent ordains (Sess. xxiii. c. 5, de Ref.) that "those who are to be raised to any one of the greater orders shall, a month before ordination, repair to the bishop, who shall commission the parish priest or some other suitable person to state publicly in the church the names and the desire of those who wish to be promoted, and to diligently inform themselves from persons worthy of credit of the birth, age, morals, and life of those who are to be ordained, and shall transmit to the bishop, as soon as possible, letters testimonial, containing the inquiry made." The rite of ordination refers to this precept, and points out the duty of reporting to the bishop, in case any one should know anything serious against a candidate.

The office of the deacon is designated by the bishop as the duty "to minister at the altar, to baptize and preach."

The bishop invites the people to pray with him, that God may "pour down upon these His servants the grace of His blessing, and mercifully preserve in them the gifts of the consecration conferred upon them."

The bishop then confers the office and the sacramental grace by the essential acts of this ordination. Extending his hands, he in a most solemn manner¹ implores God to "look with a benignant eye on these His servants, who are now dedicated as deacons to the service of His holy altars."

Placing his right hand on the head of each, he says: "Receive the Holy Ghost in order that you may have strength to enable you to resist the devil and his temptations."

He puts the stole on the left shoulder of each, and vesting him with the dalmatic, he prays: "May the Lord clothe thee with the garment of salvation and vestment of gladness, and may the dalmatic of gladness encircle thee always." Finally he presents to them the book of Gospels or the Missal, conferring "the power of reading the Gospel in the church of God, both for the living and the dead." He concludes with two prayers, that these deacons "may become worthy of those seven, whom the apostles selected, and of whom Blessed Stephen was the leader."

The obligations of the deacon were very extensive in former times. They presented the catechumens for baptism and acted as sponsors; they wiped the sacred chrism from the forehead of those that were confirmed, and bound it with a linen cloth; they were the insepara-

¹ In a preface, also called "The Consecration." This is the first order where prayer takes such solemn form.

ble ministers of the priest and bishop at the altar; they distributed Holy Communion and brought it to the absent and the sick; they published the penance to public penitents and brought them again before the bishop for reconciliation; they examined the ordinands and presented them for ordination; they visited the sick and prepared them for the reception of the holy sacraments; they were charged with the care of the poor and of the confessors in prison; they were the custodians of the church and the administrators of its revenues; they accompanied the priest when going to administer Extreme Unction; they investigated the impediments of matrimony and introduced the marriage couple to the bishop; in a word, they were "the eye, ear, mouth, heart, and soul of the bishop."

At present their ministrations are mostly limited to the altar. In case of necessity and with the permission of the pastor or the bishop they may administer Holy Communion; in the absence of the priest and in an urgent case they may baptize, and, finally, they may be commissioned by the bishop to preach.

The priest and pastor has assumed in great measure at present the offices of the deacon, and SS. Lawrence and Stephen are his special patrons. Like them, he must be ready to give his life for Christ and His holy Church, and is charged particularly with the care of the sick and the poor.

26. The Priesthood.—The ordination of priests takes place before the last verse of the Tract. The ordinands are called by name and advance in the dress of the deacon, bearing in place of the dalmatic a folded chasuble on their left arm, and holding in their right hand a lighted taper. They kneel in a semi-circle around the bishop, and the archdeacon presents them, testifying to their worthiness. The announcement to the clergy and

people is far more solemn than that for the deacons: "Since, dearest brethren," so the bishop begins, "both the master of a vessel and the passengers have either a common feeling of security or a common fear, in like manner those who have a common interest should have a common opinion. Wherefore whatsoever you know of the conduct or morals of these deacons, freely make known, and give them such testimony for the priesthood as they shall deserve, and not from any motives of affection."

He then explains the office of the priesthood to the candidates: "It is the duty of the priest to offer sacrifice, to bless, to govern, to preach, and to baptize. Heavenly wisdom, approved morals, and a long observance of the laws of God should commend those selected for it.... Realize what you do, imitate what you handle, so that, celebrating the mystery of the Lord's death, you may be able to mortify in your members all inclinations toward vice and concupiscence. Let your doctrine be spiritual medicine for the people; let the odor of your life be the delight of the Church of Christ, so that by your preaching and example you may build up the family of God, and so neither we for having promoted you, nor you for having received so great an office, may deserve to be condemned, but rather rewarded by the Lord."

The essential parts of the ordination then follow. The bishop places his hands upon the head of each candidate. After him all the priests present do the same. The bishop and the priests then hold their right hands extended and raised over the heads of the ordinands. All this is done amid a solemn and impressive silence. After having invited all to pray with him, the bishop beseeches God "to pour down upon these His servants the blessing of the Holy Ghost and the

strength of priestly grace." In the solemn form of the preface he continues to implore God "to renew in their breasts the spirit of sanctity, so that they make their lives worthy of imitation by others; that they become his prudent fellow-workers; that all the virtues may shine in them, so that being able to give a good account of the stewardship entrusted to them, they may obtain the rewards of eternal happiness."

He now vests them with the insignia of their office. He arranges the stole (*orarium*) before the breast of the newly-ordained in the form of the cross, which form is illustrative of the words: "Receive the yoke of the Lord, for His yoke is sweet and His burden light." Putting on the chasuble, he explains it to be the symbol of charity. After praying for the perfection of this charity, he continues the acts of ordination.

Whilst the "Veni Creator Spiritus" is sung, he anoints the thumb and index finger, and the palm of both hands with the oil of catechumens, "that whatever they bless may be blessed, and whatever they consecrate may be consecrated and sanctified." After thus imparting the power to bless, he communicates the power to offer, by presenting to each one the chalice with wine and water, and the paten with the host, saying: "Receive power to offer sacrifice and to celebrate Masses both for the living and the dead."

As in the other orders, the newly-ordained immediately exercise their office by offering the Holy Sacrifice with the bishop. Thus the priests were wont in ancient times to offer the Holy Sacrifice with the bishop on high feast days; Innocent III. requires the Cardinal priests to offer it with the Pope. This practice illustrates the unity of the Holy Sacrifice and of the priesthood, whose head is the bishop.

After the essential parts of the Mass are concluded,

the third power of the priesthood is communicated, that of remitting sin. This power thus appropriately appears as an emanation from the Holy Sacrifice. Christ had given His apostles the power to offer the Holy Sacrifice at the Last Supper, but the power to forgive sin He conferred upon them only after His sacrifice on the cross was consummated and He had risen and appeared to them again.

The exercise of this power presupposes the preaching of penance and of the forgiveness of sin. Therefore the priests must first confess before the bishop the faith which they are to preach. The bishop turns to the newly-ordained, the mitre on his head and crozier in hand, whilst they, standing before the altar, recite aloud the Apostles' Creed. The bishop is then again seated, and placing both hands upon the head of each, as he kneels before him, says the words: "Receive the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." He then unfolds the chasuble of each, saying: "May the Lord clothe thee with the stole of innocence." The sacerdotal power is now conferred in its entirety, and this is indicated by the unfolding of the priestly vestment.

At the close of the ordination the bishop demands of the neo-presbyter the promise of obedience. He takes the folded hands of the priest between his own, and asks: "Dost thou promise to me and my successors reverence and obedience?" to which the priest answers, "I promise," whereupon the bishop kisses him on the right cheek, saying: "The peace of the Lord be always with thee!" Answer, "Amen." This touching ceremony at the same time strikingly represents the binding force of this obedience on the priest, the paternal kindness with which the obedience is exacted by the

bishop, and the internal and external peace, which is the fruit of paternal love and filial obedience.

This same relation of the father to the son is further expressed by the parting benediction of the bishop: "May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, descend upon you, that you may be blessed in the priestly orders, and may offer propitiatory sacrifices for the sins and offences of the people to Almighty God, to whom is honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

Immediately before the last Gospel the bishop again addresses the newly-ordained, and exhorts them to "consider well the order they have received and the burden placed upon their shoulders, to strive to lead a holy and religious life, and to please Almighty God, that they may be able to obtain His graces."

In conclusion he enjoins upon those who have received the first Tonsure and the four Minor Orders to recite the seven penitential psalms, the Litany of the Saints, with the versicles and prayers; those who were ordained subdeacons or deacons, one nocturn of the divine office; those who were ordained priests to say after their first Mass three other Masses, to wit, one of the Holy Ghost, one of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a third for the faithful departed.¹

27. The Episcopate unites in itself the power and dignity of all previous orders, and is the visible source of all spiritual power committed to the organs of the Church. This is plainly seen from the rite of episcopal conse-

¹ *Hæc tamen obligatio non ita urget, ut necessario eligendi sint dies liberi primi occurrentes; "nam celebratio earundem Missarum ulterius differri poterit, si rationabilis causa subsit."* (Cavalieri, tom. c. 12. n. 20.) Notandum est per missam officio conformem in aliquo festo B. M. V. non minus satisfieri, quam per missam votivam de eadem in die libera.

cration. The consecration must take place on a Sunday or a feast of the apostles, indicating that the fulness of the power of Christ was transmitted to the apostles, whose successors are the bishops. The ancient canons require the assistance of two other bishops besides the consecrator. In case of necessity and with the indult of the Holy See, two priests may take the place of these two assistant bishops. The order of consecration is as follows:

The bishop-elect is led by the assistant bishops to the altar before the consecrator. The senior bishop requests the consecrator in the name of the Church "to raise this priest to the burden of the episcopate." The consecrator asks: "Have you the apostolic authorization?" after the reading of which he says, "Deo gratias." If the apostolic mandate requires the bishop-elect to take the oath in the presence of the consecrator, the former kneels before him, reads the oath, and then touches the Gospel-book with both hands, saying: "So help me God, and these His holy Gospels." He then, still kneeling, solemnly promises fidelity and obedience to the Holy See, and union with it in all things pertaining to the Catholic religion and ecclesiastical government. As the priest must be united to the bishop, so the bishop must be united to the Pope to exercise his office in benediction.

After the papal brief has been read and the oath taken, the so-called "examination" follows, in which the bishop-elect is asked eighteen questions concerning ecclesiastical life and orthodox faith, to which he answers "Volo" or "Credo." When this is concluded, he is led by the assistants to the consecrator, whose hand he kisses, kneeling.

Then the Mass is celebrated by the consecrator and concelebrated by the bishop-elect. The latter says the

Psalm Judica and Confiteor at the left side of the former; whilst the consecrator ascends the altar, the other is conducted to his chapel, where he takes off the cope, and with the usual prayers puts on the sandals, pectoral, stole (not crossed, but depending straight from the shoulder), the tunicella, dalmatic, chasuble, and manipule. At the "*Dominus vobiscum*" he does not turn to the people. Before the "*Alleluja*" of the Gradual or before the last verse of the "*Tract*" the consecration begins. The consecrator is seated before the middle of the altar and announces to the bishop-elect, who stands before him, the duties of a bishop. "*Episcopum oportet judicare, interpretari, consecrare, ordinare, offerre, baptizare, confirmare.*" He then invites all to pray with him, that Almighty God may confer His grace upon him who is to be consecrated. Consecrator and assistants then kneel and say the Litany of All Saints. At the conclusion, the consecrator implores God to bless, sanctify, and consecrate the elected. The latter meanwhile prostrates himself upon the ground in token of self-abasement, and of his perfect sacrifice of self for Jesus and the salvation of immortal souls. When the Litany is concluded, the Gospel-book is laid on the shoulders and neck of the consecrandus, to indicate the duty of apostolic preaching by word and deed.

Then follows the essential act of consecration. The consecrator and assisting bishops touch with both hands the head of the consecrandus, saying: "*Accipe Spiritum Sanctum.*" After that follow the consecratory prayer, the hymn "*Veni Creator Spiritus*," and the anointing of the head and hands of the consecrandus, "that he may be filled interiorly with the power of the Holy Spirit, and be protected exteriorly by the same."

When the interior consecration of the bishop is thus completed and the grace of the Holy Spirit in its ful-

ness communicated to him, the newly-consecrated bishop receives the exterior symbols of his threefold office as supreme pastor, priest, and teacher, viz., the crozier, the episcopal ring, and the book of Gospels. He is then saluted by the consecrator and his assistants with the kiss of peace and the words "Pax tibi," to which he answers: "Et cum spiritu tuo."

The Mass is then continued by both consecrator and consecrated conjointly as far as the offertory (included). When that has been read, the newly-consecrated bishop offers to the consecrator two lighted candles, two breads, and two small casks of wine.¹ The consecrator returns to the altar; the newly-consecrated goes to the Epistle side of the same altar, and unites in word and action with the consecrator. Only one host is prepared for consecration, and sufficient wine put into the chalice for both celebrants. Both partake in Holy Communion of the same host and the same chalice.

After the last blessing, immediately before the last Gospel, the consecrator blesses the mitre, and with the two assistants places it upon the head of the newly-consecrated; he then blesses the gloves and puts them on the hands of the consecrated bishop, places the ring on his finger, takes him by the right hand, seats him on the episcopal throne, and gives him the crozier. Then he intones the "Te Deum Laudamus," during which the assistants conduct the newly-consecrated bishop through the church to give his blessing to the faithful. Thus his every step is henceforth to bring blessing to his flock and joy to the Church Militant and Trium-

¹ Bread and wine are the essential and the two candles the symbolic representation of the sacrifice, which the bishop makes for the welfare of his flock. The two large candles signify that the light of episcopal example must shine far brighter than that of the priest.

phant. In conclusion, he gives the first solemn benediction from the altar.

ART. IV.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL QUALIFICATION OF THE PASTOR BY CANONICAL MISSION.

28. The Right of Exercising the Pastoral Office.—The validly-ordained priest possesses interiorly—in *radice*—the supernatural qualification for exercising the “ministry of reconciliation,” in virtue of the sacrament of Holy Orders. But to be enabled to exercise this intrinsic supernatural power licitly—and in many cases validly—in *termino*, *i. e.*, in a certain place and for certain persons, he needs furthermore an ecclesiastical qualification, namely, the “mission,” or the authorization of his ecclesiastical superiors.

In the first ages this “mission” was united with the ordination, as no cleric could be ordained without being assigned to a certain church, in which he was to exercise the power of the priesthood. But since the Third Council of Lateran (1179) this practice has ceased, and a special act of ecclesiastical authorization is therefore required. This authorization both confers the right and imposes the duty of exercising the holy ministry.

Jurisdiction.—The ecclesiastical authorization of the pastor is called jurisdiction, and is distinguished into jurisdiction of the external forum, for the external government of the Church, and jurisdiction of the internal forum, for the administration of penance.

Jurisdiction is obtained in two ways: 1. By appointment to an ecclesiastical office or dignity. This jurisdiction is called ordinary; it is inherent in the office and may be delegated. An ecclesiastical office gives its legitimate possessor the right to exercise the functions of that office (supposing that he is qualified

thereto by the proper order), to commission others with such exercise, and to limit and withdraw the commission, always, of course, in accordance with the provisions of Canon Law. Ordinary jurisdiction is that of the Sovereign Pontiff and the apostolic nuncios; of the bishop and his vicar-general (*sede vacante* the vicar capitular or administrator); of the generals, provincials, and local superiors of religious orders; finally, of canonical parish priests and their *vicarii perpetui*.¹

2. Jurisdiction may also be obtained by delegation. All jurisdiction which is not conferred by the office is delegated. It inheres in the person and can be sub-delegated only by authorization of the one delegating. The import, extent, and limitations of delegated jurisdiction differ very much in different cases, and must be learned from the text of delegation.

Limitations and Loss of Jurisdiction.—This authority is always limited to a certain time, a certain place, certain persons, and certain functions.

Ordinary jurisdiction is lost with the loss of the office to which it attaches; delegated jurisdiction by the revocation of the delegation, by lapse of the time specified, or according to the conditions expressed. Both ordinary and delegated jurisdiction are lost entirely or partially by an irregularity, which renders the sacred function of an order illicit, though not invalid; by entire or partial suspension from the exercise of sacred functions; by the interdict and the *cessatio a divinis*, which render some functions illicit, but not invalid; by deposition and degradation, whereby all spiritual power is forever taken away; finally, by major excom-

¹ For further information concerning the specific rights of these classes, especially in our country, we must refer the reader to works treating this subject *ex professo*, *v. g.*, to "Elements of Ecclesiastical Law," by Dr. S. B. Smith.

munication. This last renders all priestly functions illicit, and in case of a "vitandus," *i. e.*, of personal, public, and solemn excommunication, it makes all functions of jurisdiction invalid.

29. The Duties of the Pastor in General and of the Parish Priest in Particular.—The duties of the pastoral office arise either from charity or from justice. Charity imposes the obligation of exercising the spiritual power for the welfare of their neighbor upon all those who have received this power in ordination, and to the extent to which they have received it. For sacred orders are not conferred as a personal favor or honor, but to be exercised for the welfare of mankind. "*Oportebit in ecclesiæ ministerio semper esse mancipatos,*" says the bishop to the ordinandus; and the Council of Trent (Sess. XXIII., c. 16, de Ref.) emphatically states: "No one ought to be ordained who in the judgment of his own bishop is not useful or necessary for his churches." Every priest is therefore obliged by his order to serve the Church in some manner, and to exercise his order at least in case of necessity, *v. g.*, *in articulo mortis*. As a duty of justice the exercise of pastoral functions is incumbent upon all those who have accepted an ecclesiastical office or have been duly commissioned thereto by their superiors, and the extent of the duty is commensurate with the office or commission.

The parish priest in particular is bound in justice to teach his flock in a simple, universally intelligible, suitable, and efficient manner, so that each and every one may learn and practise what is necessary for salvation.

The priestly office enjoins upon the parish priest the duty of performing the functions of that office in a valid, worthy, and edifying manner, according to the laws and rites of the Church. To these functions belong the public common morning and afternoon service on Sun-

days and holy-days; the extraordinary services, prescribed by the rubrics or by custom, as those of Ash-Wednesday, Holy-week, etc.; the worthy and salutary administration of the sacraments and sacramentals to the extent of his faculties and the reasonable demand of his parishioners, together with the necessary preparation of the recipients; prayer and—in case of a canonical parish priest—the offering of the Holy Sacrifice for his flock on Sundays and holy-days.

The pastoral office imposes upon its incumbent the disciplinarian duty of watching over his flock, of removing from them as far as possible the dangers and hindrances to salvation, and of guiding and directing them in the way of eternal salvation.

30. Conditions Requisite to Fulfil the Duties of the Pastoral Office.—To fulfil these duties it is necessary that the pastor reside with his congregation, that he know and love his flock, and live in harmony with fellow-pastors under a common superior.

The Duty of Residence. The first condition necessary to fulfil all pastoral duties is the presence of the pastor with his congregation, for it would be impossible to teach his flock, to communicate to it the graces of Redemption, and to guard and guide it without being present. This is therefore among the first of pastoral duties, and is derived from natural and divine, as well as from ecclesiastical right. For he that will reap the reward must labor: "*Beneficium datur propter officium.*" The Council of Trent¹ therefore admonishes all pastors, "that mindful of the divine precepts, and made a pattern of the flock, they feed and rule in judgment and in truth. For by divine precept it is enjoined upon all to whom the care of souls is committed to know their own sheep; to offer sacrifice for them; and by the preach-

¹ Sess. XXIII., c. I, de Ref.

ing of the divine word, by the administration of the sacraments, and by the example of all good works, to feed them; to have a fatherly care of the poor and of other distressed persons, and to apply themselves to all other pastoral duties; all which cannot be rendered and fulfilled by those who neither watch over nor are with their own flock, but abandon it after the manner of hirelings." The duty of residence is a personal duty, and implies not only a material (passive), but a formal (active) residence in the parish, *i. e.*, personal exercise of the pastoral office, as far as that is physically and morally possible: for he that has an office must fulfil its obligations; he that is placed over a flock must render account for it, and therefore tend it. Hence it is inexcusable in a pastor from mere love of comfort to leave **nearly** all pastoral duties to his assistants and never visit the schools, the sick, etc. He should look upon his assistants—as the name itself suggests—as helpers, and he himself should be the pastor not only in name, but in deed. This personal active residence must moreover be constant, for the congregation stands in constant need of its pastor. It is, however, specially necessary on Sundays and holy-days, at night, and during times of frequent sickness and probable accidents.

A brief absence is permitted whenever there is good reason for it, and provision is made for a substitute when necessary. This absence can be protracted beyond two months only in case of very important and urgent reason, such as the Council of Trent (Sess. XXIII., c. 1, de Ref.) specifies: "Christian charity, urgent necessity, due obedience, evident utility of the Church or of the commonwealth." For an absence of two months or less an equitable cause suffices; such causes are deemed by the doctors of Canon Law to be, *v. g.*, a visit to parents, relatives, friends, recreation, etc. The

council adds the proviso "that no detriment result to the flock from the absence."

Assistant priests ought always remember that they are helpers of the pastor, and should therefore in a spirit of obedience readily take his place. They themselves ought never absent themselves for a whole day without the knowledge of the pastor.

A knowledge of the congregation is another prerequisite for the fulfilment of pastoral duty; for the pastor will be unable to teach his flock suitably to its need, or to administer the sacraments properly, or to guide and direct it as he ought, if he have no personal knowledge of it. It is his duty therefore to acquire this knowledge in general as well as in particular. For a general knowledge of his congregation it is not sufficient that the pastor know the number of his parishioners; he must know their general circumstances, such as their material condition of wealth or poverty; their general temper, habits, and mental attainments; the status of religious education; the prevalent faults, abuses, vices; the source of these vices, etc., etc.

In particular the pastor should know the well disposed and the wicked, the ignorant and the educated, those that exercise a good, and those that exercise an evil influence, those that give scandal; he should know the children, the poor, the widows and orphans, the sick, and all those that stand in need of instruction, counsel, admonition, and consolation.

The pastor has various means of obtaining this knowledge, *v. g.*, information of his predecessors, of neighboring pastors, of members of the congregation; then his own observation; visitation of the schools (for through the children he will learn to know the parents); visits to the sick; the confessional; friendly intercourse with the individual members of the congregation. Occa-

sional friendly visits to their homes are not only justified, but dictated by duty, by the spiritual utility of the parishioners, the requirements of politeness, and the recreation necessary to the pastor himself. All these means must be employed with a pure intention, namely, with the view of making himself all for all. Most objectionable would be the employment of spies, listening to tale-bearing, etc. The pastor must ever be on his guard lest his judgment be misled by evil-minded informants; he must beware of obtaining his knowledge through one channel only, and be most cautious where there is any danger of injustice. In every case he must seek to know only that which pertains to the care of souls, and never pry into matters foreign to his office.

A prudent, disinterested, self-sacrificing love is an indispensable condition for the faithful and fruitful fulfilment of pastoral duty.

Harmonious Co-operation of Pastors.—All who have the care of souls must look upon themselves as representatives of the One Good Shepherd, and must concurrently and harmoniously, in unity, mutual respect, and fraternal charity, labor for the one common end, the edification of their flocks. The best intentions and most earnest zeal are apt to do more harm than good when they create disharmony and division. The Supreme Pastor therefore prayed especially for unity among His apostles and their successors in His last solemn prayer: "That they all may be one as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they may also be one in us." This unity, however, does not mean mechanical uniformity, but a unity of sentiment and spirit with regard to the end and essential means, which respects at the same time the individual and peculiar gifts of each pastor, and leaves unessential methods and means to the discretion of each.

St. Augustine has formulated this law of unity in the words "In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus charitas." Opposed to this unity is that division among pastors which works such incalculable harm among the faithful, which begets an uncatholic intolerance in things that are neither commanded nor rejected by the Church; mutual jealousies; uncharitable criticism; casting suspicion on the acts of another; presumption and intrusion in the sphere of another from false, selfish zeal, etc., etc.

Above all it is necessary that the pastors of one and the same congregation agree upon the means, manner, and hindrances of their labor, and then with united effort prosecute the common end.

This unity is perfected by the subordination of all under their legitimate superior. This subordination was established by Christ; it assigns to each soul its definite pastor, who must one day render an account for it. The pastor with his assistant clergy has the care of the congregation; the bishop has the care of the subordinate pastors; the bishops themselves are under the tutelage of the head of the Church, and over all watches and reigns the Supreme Pastor, Jesus Christ. By means of this subordination the least member of the body of Christ is intimately united with the Head, Jesus Christ, and each is sure of that care and guidance necessary for its eternal salvation. Every pastor must therefore—to be able to lead his charges in the way of salvation—thoroughly appreciate and acknowledge this his subordinate position, and show towards his superiors, the pope, his bishop, and the representatives of the bishop, reverence in sentiment, word, and deed, and canonical obedience. This obedience is the bond which unites all the members of the Church with one another and with the Head. It is promised by the bish-

op at his consecration, by the priest at his ordination, and by the (canonical) pastor at his appointment to the parish. It extends to the threefold office of the teacher, the priest, and the pastor.

Book First.

HOMILETICS.

"We preach Christ crucified."—I Corinthians, i. 23.

CHAPTER I.

THE TEACHING OFFICE.

31. Nature and Division of the Pastor's Offices.—Christ Jesus, the Supreme Pastor of souls, proclaimed Himself "the Way and the Truth and the Life." In imitation of Him every Christian pastor must proclaim *the truth* to his flock by teaching them; must communicate to them divine *life* by means of the Holy Sacrifice and the sacraments; and must guide them in the *way* of virtue and Christian perfection by word and example. This threefold office was explicitly committed to the apostles and their successors by Christ in the words, "Going, therefore, *teach* ye all nations; *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; *teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

The minister of Christ, therefore, has a threefold office to fulfil: 1. The teaching office ("teach ye all nations"); 2. The priestly office ("baptizing them"); 3. The pastoral office ("teaching them to observe").

32. Object and Subject of the Teaching Office. Its Divisions.—The first of the pastoral duties is that of teaching.

“Faith then cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. How shall they call on the name of the Lord, in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” Our Lord began His work of Redemption by teaching. “Jesus *began* to preach, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of His kingdom.”

As the first end of man is to know God in order to love and serve Him, so the first duty of the Church in directing man to this end is that of instruction in the knowledge of God. This follows from the very nature of man. Since the will of man, which is the faculty of love, and which commands the acts of the other faculties, is in itself a blind faculty, dependent upon the intellect for its guidance, the pastor must first address himself to the intellect, and through it move the will and the affections. This he does in his official capacity as teacher, duly sent and authorized by the Church.

His hearers will necessarily be grouped into two classes: one class consisting of those who require elementary instruction,—the unbaptized, converts, Christian children,—“who need to be taught what are the first elements of the word of God;” the other consisting of the adults in faith, such as have no longer “need of milk, but of strong meat.” The first kind of instruction has received the name of *Catechetics*, the second of *Homiletics*. Though in point of importance and in the natural order *Catechetics* should be treated before *Homiletics*, we shall follow the usual and more convenient order by treating first of *Homiletics*.

33. End and Necessity of Preaching.—The homiletic office, or the office of preaching, is to teach, upon due authorization, the adults in faith. It is, in point of time, the first office which Christ Himself exercised when He

began His work of Redemption. He "went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of His kingdom." The preaching of divine truth was an integral part of the Redemption, and therefore one of the objects of the Incarnation. "For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth."

After His ascent into heaven, Our Lord committed the continuation and individual application of His Redemption to the Holy Ghost, and to His Church, charging her with the entire threefold office: "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." He imposed upon her also the prophetic office, or the office of teaching: "Going, teach ye all nations." The Church carries out this commission through her bishops and priests. The teaching office of the Church is the teaching office of Christ.

The primary object, then, of the preaching of the divine word is to preserve the Christian truth, the deposit of faith, to give testimony of the truth, to authenticate and to explain it. There is in the Church an irrepressible necessity of manifesting and proclaiming the faith, hope, and love that is within her. It is the same necessity that impelled the apostles to preach, notwithstanding the prohibition of the council of the Jews. "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." It is, moreover, a sacred duty for the Church to confess Christ before the world.

The Church, however, owes this duty of preaching not only to Christ, to the divine truth, and to her own inner life, she owes it no less to mankind. She has been appointed to preach "everywhere," "to all nations," "to every creature." Preaching is to continue and develop what catechetical instruction has begun, to foster and strengthen the supernatural life of faith

instilled into the heart by primary teaching; or if that life has fled the soul, preaching is to restore it. Thus the end of all preaching reduces itself to the glorification of God and the sanctification of man.

The necessity of preaching follows directly from this end. For the glory of God and the sanctification of man are possible only through the correct knowledge of God and the submission of man's mind and will to divine truth. This knowledge and submission by faith presuppose (at least ordinarily) the communication of divine truth from without, and since the ordinary means of communication is by word of mouth, they presuppose the oral preaching of the word of God. "How shall they believe Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Moreover, this preaching must be continuous and unceasing, lest this knowledge and love of divine truth, through the fickleness of human nature, the distractions of daily life, the evil influences from without, and the corrupt tendencies of the heart, grow obscure and gradually die out. This necessity of preaching is illustrated in Holy Writ by three similitudes. First, the word of God is compared to the seed that is again and again sown by the eternal Sower. As the seed is the necessary principle of all fruit, so there is no spiritual growth, no spiritual harvest, without the preaching of the word of God. The preaching of divine truth is likewise compared to the dew and the rain, which refresh and fructify the tender herbage. Thus the divine word is not only a seed, but also an energy, which adds shoot and bud to the seed. "I have planted; Apollo watered." "Let my doctrine gather as the rain; let my speech distil as the dew, as a shower upon the herb, and as drops upon the grass." The earth and every plant it bears would be parched and shrivelled into a sapless and shapeless

heap without the dew and the rain; and similarly would the hearts of men wither, pine away, and perish for the want of the word of God. Holy Scripture compares the preacher to the rain-yielding cloud. The threat of the prophet, "I will command the clouds to rain no rain upon my vineyard," signifies the terrible punishment of leaving a commonwealth without the preaching of God's truth. Bread is used as another illustration of the word of God. As the life of the body is not sustained without food, so neither is the life of the soul. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, and I will send forth a famine into the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord." Where the preaching of God's word ceases or is not carried on in the proper manner, there will be decline of faith, hope, charity, of all supernatural life, and of every virtue. The Church therefore has ever considered this one of the most important and stringent of her duties, and at all times has exacted its faithful and efficient fulfilment from her ministers.

34. The Duty of Preaching.—This is a strict duty of justice, binding in the first place all pastors, and hence, above all, the bishop, the supreme pastor of his diocese. Next to these the obligation rests upon all who are in any way charged with the cure of souls.¹ The duty is founded in the natural as well as in the positive divine and ecclesiastical law. The pastor is the father, teacher, shepherd, and guide of those whose eternal welfare is intrusted to his care. The natural law gives the child a claim to be nursed and reared by its parent, the pupil a claim to the instruction of the teacher, the flock to the guidance of the shepherd, the soldiers to the leadership of their commander. The pastor is in virtue of his office obliged to lead his flock

¹ Council of Trent, sess. v., c. 2, de Ref.

on the way to eternal life, to sanctify them, and direct them to God. But, as we have seen, supernatural faith and the life of faith are impossible without the preaching of the word of God. This duty is imposed upon the pastor by positive divine law, and first by the example of Christ, "who went through the cities and towns teaching," as well as by His direct injunction, "Go ye and teach." The apostles have set the same example, for "going forth, they preached everywhere," and in appointing the seven deacons they assigned as their motive: "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables; but we will give ourselves to the ministry of the word." They insisted emphatically on this duty; St. Paul, for instance, saying: "If I preach the Gospel, it is no glory to me; for a necessity lieth upon me; for woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." The same apostle "charges Timothy before God and Jesus Christ to preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season." The Old Testament inculcates this duty: "Son of man, I have appointed thee a watchman to the house of Israel, and thou shalt hear the word out of My mouth, and shalt tell it to them from Me." The Prophet Isaias calls those that are negligent in this duty "dumb dogs, not able to bark."

The positive ecclesiastical law is very distinct and emphatic on this subject. The Council of Trent¹ declares it to be "by divine precept enjoined on all to whom the care of souls is committed to know their own sheep; to offer sacrifice for them, and by the preaching of the divine word . . . to feed them." And again more explicitly:² "Seeing that the preaching of the Gospel is no less necessary to the Christian commonwealth than the reading thereof, and whereas this is the principal duty of bishops, the holy synod hath resolved and de-

¹ Sess. III., c. I, de Ref.

² Sess. v., c. 2, de Ref.

creed that all bishops, archbishops, primates, and all other prelates of the churches be bound personally—if they be not lawfully hindered—to preach the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ. But if it should happen that bishops and the others aforesaid be hindered by any lawful impediment, they shall be bound to appoint fit persons to discharge wholesomely this office of preaching. But if any one through contempt do not execute this, let him be subjected to rigorous punishment. Archpriests, curates, and all those who in any manner soever hold any parochial or other churches which have the cure of souls, shall at least on the Lord's days and solemn feasts, either personally, or if they be lawfully hindered, by others who are competent, feed the people committed to them with wholesome words, according to their own capacity and that of their people, by teaching them the things which it is necessary for all to know unto salvation, and by announcing to them with briefness and plainness of discourse the vices which they must avoid and the virtues which they must follow after, that they may escape everlasting punishment and obtain the glory of heaven. And if any one of the above neglect to discharge this duty—even though he may plead, on whatsoever ground, that he is exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop—let not the watchful pastoral solicitude of the bishops be wanting, lest that word be fulfilled: 'The little ones have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them.' Wherefore, if after having been admonished by the bishop they shall neglect this their duty for the space of three months, let them be compelled by ecclesiastical censures, or otherwise, at the discretion of the said bishop, in such wise that even a fair remuneration be paid out of the fruits of the benefices to some other person to discharge that office, until

the principal himself, repenting, shall fulfil his own duty."

The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, repeating this precept of the Council of Trent, makes the following application: ¹ "We have to our great sorrow heard it reported that in not a few places many of the faithful scarcely ever hear the word of God preached, for either from necessity or choice they assist only at Low Mass on Sundays, during which never once throughout the entire year the wholesome food of the word of God is administered to them. Thus it is not surprising that 'truths are decayed from among the children of men;' that many parents, as well as their children and servants, and so many others are, in these perilous times, exposed to the danger of eternal perdition from their ignorance of the mysteries of faith.

"Desirous of remedying effectually so great an evil, we command that all those who have the care of souls shall, either personally, or if they be lawfully hindered, by other competent persons, on Sundays and feast days, not excepting the summer season, at all Masses, Low Masses as well as High Masses, even if they be celebrated at a very early hour, read distinctly in the vernacular the Gospel of the day, and if time permits, instruct the people in the Law of the Lord for five minutes, all customs or pretexts to the contrary notwithstanding. If there be any one who persistently neglects to comply with this command, he shall be severely punished by the Ordinary. The sermon proper shall be held at the last Mass, which is with us accounted the Community, or the Parochial Mass."

This decree thus enjoins preaching at least for Sundays and holy-days of obligation, and at the High Mass; whenever possible, also at the Low Masses on those

¹ Decr. No. 216.

days. In cities and large congregations in the country these short sermons at every Mass are an almost indispensable necessity. In smaller congregations a reason is often advanced against the practice of five-minute sermons in that it may induce some people to indulge their indolence and negligence by attending Low Mass only, and habitually neglecting High Mass. It is certainly prudent to guard against the creeping in of any such custom, but when the custom already obtains, it must be taken into account, and its evil consequences are best counteracted by observing the above decree. Besides these occasions, the Council of Trent mentions¹ "the season of the fasts, of Lent, and of the advent of the Lord," when sermons should be held "daily, or at least on three days in the week, if the bishop shall deem it needful." In this country this decree is by custom observed to the extent of preaching a course of Lenten sermons, generally on one evening of the week, or in the country on Sunday afternoon. Finally, the anniversaries of Church societies, sodalities, confraternities, Catholic benevolent associations, and others of the kind are opportune occasions for addressing the members on special appropriate subjects. Many pastors furthermore hold short and appropriate discourses once a month to the sodalities, especially of young people. It is impossible to value too highly the beneficent effects of such a practice.

The *dignity* of the office of preaching is evident from its nature as well as from the eulogies of the great doctors and preachers of the Church. The preaching of the Gospel is the message of God to men for their salvation. Tertullian² says that the living word, which Christ has left us, is, as it were, His second body, for it is the word of eternal truth, by which He speaks to men

¹ Sess. xxiv., c. 4, de Ref.

² De Resurrect., xxxvii.

and dwells among them. Gregory the Great¹ compares the preachers to the lips of the bridegroom, and explains that these lips are called lilies because those by whom Christ speaks must be pure and emit a savory odor. In other places² he calls them kings and consuls, because they are the leaders of the faithful; he compares them again to the clouds of heaven and the streams of the earth that irrigate the land; to the gates of Sion, that introduce the hearers to the hidden heights of contemplation; to the teeth of the Church, because they crush the hardest sinners by their word; to angels, because they proclaim the glories of the heavenly country. The recollection of this dignity will inspire the preacher at once with great confidence, zeal, and humility in the preparation of his sermon and in the act of preaching.

No less great is the *power* of God's word. Holy Writ testifies to this power: "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." "Thy almighty word," etc. "My word, which shall go forth from My mouth shall not return to Me void, but it shall do whatsoever I please, and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it." "Are not My words as a fire, saith the Lord; and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" "The word of God is living and effectual." The whole history of the Church as well as daily observation confirms these eulogies on the power of preaching.

A provincial council³ has compressed in a few words all that may be said on this subject. We quote the words themselves, because no translation would do justice to the beauty of the original: "Gravissimum sane et plane eximium sacri oratoris est munus. *Originem* enim si attendis, Prophetarum, Apostolorum, ipsiusque

¹ Expos. in Cant., l. v. ² Expos. mor. in Job, lib. iv. et seq.

³ Conc. prov. Col. 1860, p. 2 to 2, c. 61.

Christi premit vestigia; si *finem*, Dei omnipotentis gloriam et animarum provehit salutem; si *res*, quas enuntiat, divina pandit mysteria; si *illos ad quos* loquitur, animæ immortales et Christi sanguine redemptæ vocem ejus auscultantur; si *adversarios* contra quos nitendum est, portæ inferi validissimas objiciunt acies; si *auxilia* quibus juvatur, ecclesia opem divinam implorat, Spiritus Sancti gratia, Christus ipse ei præsto est; si denique laborum *præmium*, fulgebunt, qui ad justitiam erudiunt multos, quasi stellæ in perpetuas æternitates."

It follows directly that the preaching of the word of God should be of a character suited to the dignity of this word, the importance of its end, the necessities of the hearers, and the express wishes and commands of the Church. The preacher who is duly impressed with the greatness of his office can never enter upon its exercise frivolously, without serious preparation and earnest prayer. He will endeavor to qualify himself more and more for the attainment of the great ends of preaching by the study of precepts and models, and by earnest, constant practice. These precepts and laws are laid down in the pastoral science called *Homiletics*.

35. Definition and Division of Homiletics.—The name "homiletics" is derived from *ὁμιλία*, which in its wider sense signifies spiritual discourse in general. A spiritual discourse is any religious address on any divine truth, spoken by the priest as the organ of the Church, in the name of Christ, to the faithful, with the final view of glorifying God and sanctifying man. Homiletics teaches what must be the character of such a discourse in matter and form so as to attain this end. Accordingly it treats first of the sermon in general, pointing out the sources of matter for the sermon, the development of this matter with a view to the end of preaching, the proper arrangement of it, and finally,

the style and delivery of the sermon. After this it will consider the various kinds of sermons, as they differ in subject-matter, in form, and in their external occasion, dwelling on the peculiarities of each kind. The general and the proximate preparation for the composition and delivery of a sermon form an apt subject for conclusion.

CHAPTER II.

SELECTION OF MATTER FOR PREACHING.

36. General Principles governing Selection of Matter.
—The subject-matter of all Christian preaching is pointed out by St. Paul in the words, "We preach Christ crucified." The cross is in truth the central subject of all Christian instruction. It teaches God's goodness and love;¹ God's justice;² God's wisdom and providence;³ eternal reward and punishment;⁴ the priceless value of the human soul;⁵ the grievousness of sin.⁶ The cross makes manifest the grace of God, for by the cross is offered us reconciliation, forgiveness of sin, redemption;⁷ the friendship and sonship of God,⁸ strength in our weakness,⁹ and comfort and help in all our trials.¹⁰ The graces of the cross are treasured up in the sacraments; he that is buried with Christ in Baptism is also quickened together with Him, and receives in the chalice of benediction the blood of Christ.¹¹ The cross teaches Christian perfection, and exhorts to the practice of every virtue.¹² It inculcates renunciation of the world and of self,¹³ humility, obedience,¹⁴ faith,¹⁵ pa-

¹ Rom. v. 8; viii. 32.

² 1 Tim. ii. 6; Hebr. ix. 26.

³ Gal. iii. 13, 14.

⁴ Hebr. x. 27-29.

⁵ 1 Cor. vi. 20; viii. 11, 12. ⁶ Hebr. x. 29; 1 Cor. viii. 11, 12; xi. 27, 29.

⁷ Rom. v. 9, 11; Eph. i. 7; ii. 16; Col. i. 14, 20-22; ii. 14; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Tit. ii. 14; Hebr. ii. 15; ix. 12, 15.

⁸ Eph. ii. 13; i. 5.

⁹ 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

¹⁰ 2 Cor. i. 5.

¹¹ Rom. v. 3, 5; Col. ii. 12; 1 Cor. x. 16, 20.

¹² Tit. ii. 11-14; 1 Cor. v. 7; vi. 20; Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

¹³ 2 Cor. iv. 10.

¹⁴ Phil. ii. 7; Hebr. v. 8, 9.

¹⁵ Gal. ii. 20; 2 Tim. i. 10-12.

tience,¹ hope,² love of God ³ and of our neighbor.⁴ The cross presents the most perfect model of all virtue and sanctity.

To say, then, that "Christ crucified" is the subject of all Christian preaching is the same as saying that the entire divine truth, transmitted by Christ, and testified to by His infallible Church, deposited in the Scriptures, in tradition, in the symbols of faith, etc., is subject-matter for preaching. The Council of Trent has given to pastors in a most excellent handbook, *The Roman Catechism*, the entire matter, as well as the directions for the manner of instruction. The first requisite, then, is that the preacher announce *the truth*. God is truth; His word is truth, and for the messenger of God it is therefore essential that the matter of his discourse be truth. This is necessary, not only for the substance of his doctrine, but equally so for the explanations, arguments, texts, examples, etc. "He that hath My word, let him speak My word with truth." It is, for instance, not at all commendable to relate fictitious examples in corroboration or illustration of any statement, nor is there any excuse for doing so when we have so many compilations of well-authenticated examples covering the whole ground of Christian doctrine.

It is furthermore evident that the truth preached should be of a *religious* character. Even the explanations, illustrations, etc., should bear this character, or at least be intimately connected with religious truth. Christian truth, then, in its entirety is subject-matter for the pulpit. All revealed truths serve a distinct purpose—the sanctification of man; and no revelation was

¹ Hebr. xii. 1-4; Rom. viii. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

² Hebr. ii. 14, 15, 18; x. 19; xii. 3; Rom. viii. 31-34; v. 10.

³ Rom. viii. 35-39.

⁴ 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Phil. ii. 1; Rom. xiv. 15; Tit. iii. 2.

made without this end or purpose. Wherefore Our Lord commands: "Teach them to observe *all*, whatsoever I have commanded you," and the Apostle, in bidding farewell to his flock, testifies of his preaching: "I have not spared to declare unto you *all* the counsel of God." Objectively speaking, there are no "arcana" (secret doctrines) in the Church. All the history of the Bible and of religion, the entire doctrine of faith and morals, ascetics and liturgy, all that pertains to the faith and life of the Church, their manifestation and preservation, fall within the range of sacred oratory. Not only the express dogma, but also common opinions of theologians, pious traditions, pious practices and devotions are subjects for the pulpit. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore¹ "strongly advises priests to draw their salutary admonitions not alone from the Gospel reading, but to devote themselves to a connected and thorough presentation of Christian doctrine, even in the order of the Roman Catechism or that of the catechism of the diocese, or of any approved author. Thus they will never be at a loss for subject-matter, and will not accustom the people to certain methods of teaching which pass over in silence some of the principal mysteries of faith and works of the disciples of Christ."

To preach the whole truth, it is not sufficient to preach it in its entire extent; it must be taught likewise in its intrinsic fulness, depth, and power. Every doctrine must be represented in its essential points (meaning, certainty, application), accurately, intelligibly, and thoroughly; furthermore in its value and importance, its beauty and blessedness for man, and finally in its relation and practical application to daily life. Such a presentation alone will be complete, efficient, and

¹ Decr. No. 216.

fruitful for the intellect and will of the hearers, and alone capable of penetrating their whole mind and controlling and sanctifying their whole life. To this end it is necessary to show the intrinsic connection and harmony between the various doctrines, since every individual doctrine borrows additional clearness, force, beauty, and impressiveness from comparison with others.

37. Special Rules for Selection of Matter.—The wide range of Christian religious truths necessitates a selection. The general principle for selecting the subject of the sermon is implied in the end of preaching. That subject must be chosen which under given circumstances is most adapted to edify the hearers, and hence best suited to their interior dispositions and their external circumstances of time, place, position, etc.

The Council of Trent¹ formulates this principle thus: "Pastors shall feed the people committed to them with wholesome words, *according to their own capacity and that of their people.*" Hence the preacher in selecting his subject and in his manner of treating it must take into consideration his own age, position, influence, mental and physical ability, etc. Certain subjects are less appropriate for a young priest than for a priest advanced in years and experience, *v. g.*, marital relations, censuring of the audience, etc. Other subjects will suit the position of the pastor that would ill become a stranger. The limit of his own capacity will exclude from this choice of the preacher such subjects as he is incapable of handling. "Seek not the things that are too high for thee, and search not into things above thy ability." Individual bent of mind and education will modify to a great extent the subject and its treatment. One preacher inclines more to explanation, another to

¹ Sess. v., c. 2, de Ref.

argument; one to speculation, another to practical subjects; one loves to dwell on this, another on a different favorite devotion, etc. Even in the times of the apostles one possessed the gift of "prophecy, another divers kinds of tongues, another the interpretation of speeches." Such individual partiality for certain classes of subjects is legitimate as long as it remains free from exclusive one-sidedness and does not create monotony and disgust in the hearer, or, as the Council of Baltimore, quoted above, says, as long as it does not pass over in silence some of the principal mysteries of our holy faith, etc. A correct education in the seminary will easily prevent this. But it will be furthermore effectually prevented or remedied by a due consideration of the needs and capacities of the hearers. Our Lord and the apostles in their preaching show this wise consideration of the disposition of their hearers: "I have yet many things to say to you; but you cannot bear them now," and St. Paul to the Corinthians: "I could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. As unto little ones in Christ, I gave you milk to drink, not meat: for you were not able as yet." The necessities of the hearers demand that they be made acquainted first with what is "necessary to know unto salvation"—the fundamental truths of religion: those that are absolutely necessary to know (*necessitate medii*), and those that are necessary to know by divine command (*necessitate præcepti*), in so far as the hearers are able to understand them. Not alone their absolute, but their relative requirements are to be consulted by the preacher, and he must therefore select for the subject-matter of his sermons prevailing errors, vices, sins, and dangers; he must consider the circumstances of time, place, condition of life, which create new dangers: dangers, *v. g.*, resulting from factory labor, from socialistic

organizations, frequent association with non-Catholics, dangers of dancing, various so-called "parties" customary in certain localities; he must dwell on the particular virtues necessary for his people: *v. g.*, contentment, industry for the poor; charity, humility, etc., for the wealthy classes. If his audience, as will generally be the case, is made up of various classes, he must keep in view, as far as possible, all these different classes and select and treat his subject in a manner profitable to all. There will be found amongst his hearers, for instance, sinners of various kinds, pious Christians in various stages of perfection, beginners, more advanced, and perfect souls. To satisfy all these classes, their conditions and necessities, he will be obliged to select subjects that admit of a many-sided development. In commending a virtue, *v. g.*, he may first show the malice and shamefulness of violating it; for the just he may dwell on the manner and means of practising it in its various grades and in various states of the soul tending to perfection.

Another consideration to be taken in the selection of a subject regards the desire and expectation of the hearers, which is oftentimes founded on the special nature of the occasion or of the ecclesiastical season.

The liturgy of the Church ought indeed be one of the primary factors considered in determining the subject. The sermon prepares the faithful for a worthy and fruitful participation in the divine service, instilling into them the sentiments necessary for justification and sanctification, *v. g.*, of faith, hope, charity, contrition, devotion, etc., or it sustains and strengthens these sentiments, whilst at the same time the divine worship disposes them favorably to the hearing of the word of God. The Church has at all times connected the preaching of the word of God with her divine service.

The homiletic explanation of the Holy Scriptures was from most ancient times a part of the Mass of Catechumens, and the Council of Trent¹ "charges pastors and all who have the cure of souls that they frequently during the celebration of Mass expound some portion of those things which are read at Mass, and that amongst the rest they explain some mystery of this most holy sacrifice, especially on the Lord's days and festivals." Hence the sermon ordinarily corresponds to the liturgical celebration, and its subject-matter will be pointed out thereby. In carrying out this principle the preacher will most easily fulfil the precept of the Lord: "Teaching them to observe *all things whatsoever* I have commanded you." For the liturgy of the Church comprises in the course of the ecclesiastical year all the prominent facts, doctrines, and mysteries of Revelation and of Redemption. Thus the preacher will have explained in the course of a year all the main subjects of religion by adhering to the order of the formulary of the Mass and of the divine office.

From this regular course he will sometimes be obliged to deviate by extraordinary occurrences of a festive and joyous or of a sad nature, brought on or permitted by Divine Providence. It is the office of the preacher to point out the aims of Providence on such occasions, and to turn them to the profit of the faithful.

Still, the regular course of the liturgy and the extraordinary occasions arising from various sources give us the general principles only for selecting the subject-matter of sermons. The concrete practical direction must always be taken from the view of the last end of preaching—the edification of the faithful—and from local circumstances. Besides, the liturgy is so pregnant with material for preaching, and one and the same sub-

¹ Sess. XXII., c. 8.

ject may be developed and applied in such various ways, that it would be impossible to exhaust the matter in a single year. The preacher ought therefore to arrange his subjects in such an order that in a term of about five years or more the whole circle of Christian Revelation will have been presented to his flock according to their capacity and necessity.

38. Matter to be Excluded from the Pulpit.—In this connection it is necessary to point out the subjects that ought not to find their way into a Christian pulpit. All that is not the word of God or has no reference to the salvation of men is by the very end of preaching excluded from the pulpit. Much more, then, ought that to remain foreign to preaching which might in any way prejudice or work counter to this salvation. Hence all subjects like the following should be carefully avoided:—interpretations of Scripture contrary to the sense of the Church and of the holy fathers, all doubtful stories, new revelations, apparitions, visions, and miracles, not yet investigated or approved by the Sovereign Pontiff or by the Ordinary; prophecies concerning the future, the particular time of the advent of Antichrist, or the last judgment; all exaggeration as well as minimizing of Catholic faith or morals; rigorism as well as laxism; purely secular matters, news-items, political or civil affairs, idle tales, satire, flattery, personalities; self-praise, complaint of a small audience, self-defence, etc. The Council of Baltimore¹ says on this head: “We earnestly exhort preachers as well as Catholic writers to ‘avoid profane novelties of words,’ for they often conceal deceit and danger. Idle and silly tales are proscribed from the pulpit even by natural reason. By means of these Catholic doctrine is not glorified, but exposed to the mockery of non-Catholics to the confusion and

¹ Decr. No. 215.

scandal of the faithful. Let those that are ambassadors for Christ, whose kingdom is not of this world, take care not rashly to address the faithful on political matters or other questions that in nowise pertain to their ministry.¹ It is furthermore very unbecoming to a minister of Christ and to the holy place to talk, or still worse, to scold on all possible occasions about insufficient salary or revenues. Finally, it is an intolerable audacity for the preacher to reprehend by name any one of the faithful, or to designate any one by such insidious circumlocution that he may easily be recognized by all. Let no one dare to abuse the sacred place and occasion to avenge private injury, and if any one presumes to do so he shall be punished with more than ordinary severity by the bishop." In a word, all questions must be avoided that are vain or harmful or too difficult, for instance, subtle questions on the Blessed Trinity, Transubstantiation, predestination, obscure passages of Holy Writ, incautious casuistry, or a vivid representation of great vices.

It is dangerous and harmful to faith to present difficulties, doubts, false principles, and doctrines, hitherto unknown to the hearers, and not to answer them satisfactorily. It is detrimental to Christian hope to introduce such subjects or such treatment of subjects as may be calculated to lead to fanaticism, scrupulosity, pusillanimity, despair, or presumption; charity forbids the

¹ Yet whenever political questions assume a religious form, when they affect or touch upon faith and conscience, the pastor is obliged to instruct the faithful on the religious aspect of these questions. Political crimes are far more disastrous to human society than individual private crimes, and it is the sacred duty of the pastor to point out the danger of these politico-religious heresies, to refute them, and to rebut their assaults. He must forever guard his flock against that liberalism which, under the guise of patriotism, would surrender religious conviction and belief.

preacher to foster sinful or passionate dispositions, such as hatred, revengeful feeling, against particular persons or classes. Narration of vulgar or atrociously wicked occurrences, constant thundering, threatening, or punishing will blunt the finer sensibilities, whilst a mawkish sentimentality will cultivate effeminacy among the hearers. Especially dangerous, however, are those subjects which are apt to draw the will of man into sin, for instance, graphic descriptions of various vices, too plain a description of secret sins, and of the excuses and the means which sinners adopt; examples that may create scandal, when related, for instance, of superiors or parents, etc.

Again, all instructions and admonitions that might lead the sinner still deeper into sin ought to be delayed until the persons concerned are more favorably disposed. Those that commit material sin only must not without necessity be made to commit formal sin. So-called material sinners are to be corrected, then, only when they are in bad faith, *i. e.*, when they are in doubt or suspect the sinfulness of their action,—a condition that is to be presumed in all transgressions of divine or natural law; when the correction may be expected to produce at least a gradual good effect; when higher considerations, *v. g.*, the rights or the spiritual welfare of third parties is concerned. Moreover, the condition even of weak, sinful men would only be aggravated by hasty or imprudent admonitions and injunctions, and with them the caution is to be observed: "The bruised reed he shall not break, and smoking flax he shall not extinguish."

CHAPTER III.

DEVELOPMENT OF MATTER. APPEAL TO THE INTELLECT.

ART. I.

CLEARNESS.

39. Nature and Necessity of Clearness. -St. Augustine has laid down the principle for developing the subject of a sermon. Truth, according to him, must be rendered plain, pleasing, and persuasive. "Veritas pateat, placeat, moveat."¹ It must be made to convince the understanding, win the affections of man, and persuade and determine the will to action.

The intellect determines the will *per modum finis*. It is impossible for man to love and practise a truth of which he is entirely ignorant. Hence the first aim of preaching must be to impart a clear and distinct knowledge of any particular truth. Our knowledge of anything is said to be clear when we recognize the characteristic notes and properties of its nature sufficiently to distinguish it from others. A distinct knowledge adds to this a perception of the constituent elements, intrinsic structure, etc. An adequate knowledge comprehends, not only the essential, but also the accidental notes of the respective object, whilst a comprehensive idea implies a full grasp of all its bearings, relations, possibil-

¹ De Doctr. Christ., lib. iv., c. 28.

ities, etc. The first degree of knowledge is ever necessary for the understanding of any truth, and at least this the preacher must strive to impart. Nor is it at all wise to presuppose, especially in our country and circumstances, this clear knowledge of even the fundamental truths of religion. Instance, for the sake of illustration, the audience in a large cathedral. It may number three or four thousand. The larger part of this number will very probably consist of women,—wives of merchants, clerks, and laboring men,—servants, and other workinggirls. The other part will be composed of men,—laborers, mechanics, servants, merchants, a few lawyers and physicians. It is a generous supposition that three or four hundred of all these enjoy more than an elementary education. But supposing their secular education to surpass the ordinary, can the same be said of their religious education? A large number, perhaps, have obtained their education in irreligious schools, and their religious training has been altogether neglected. Those, however, who have in this respect been most favored,—do they continue to develop and extend their knowledge of religion? They read their daily papers, spend considerable time with novels and other light reading; above all, their minds are distracted and drawn away from religion throughout the week, and for many of them the attendance at divine service and at the sermon on Sunday is rather a matter of tradition or of social necessity. In the country these conditions are, if different at all, certainly not more favorable. How necessary, then, is it over and over again to explain in a clear and popular manner the truths of religion.

To enter into some detail: all those ideas or truths that may reasonably be supposed to be unknown to the large majority of the hearers, either because they

have never learnt or have again forgotten them, must be explained each time that mention is made of them: for instance, archæological or liturgical explanations, without which certain passages of Holy Scripture cannot be understood. Furthermore, such truths as are of special importance for Christian life; for example, the fundamental truths of Christianity, the Blessed Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the operations of the Holy Ghost, end of man, and means of attaining that end, etc. Again, ideas and truths which are frequently misinterpreted: liberty, honor, love, progress, or the doctrines of the Church, of the infallibility of the Pope, of indulgences, of invocation of saints, of Purgatory, etc. Finally, many expressions, which in religious language have a meaning different from the ordinary: such as justification, grace, world, mortification, flesh, etc., etc.

40. Means and Methods of Clearness. Explanation.—We may use two means for rendering a truth clear and intelligible: explanation and illustration. The explanation may be direct, either verbal or real or both, or it may be indirect, by negating contraries. Verbal explanation substitutes for the word or the passage to be explained other words of identical meaning, but of more familiar usage, and hence more intelligible to the hearers.¹ Another kind of verbal explanation is the paraphrase, a running explanation by circumlocution which does not interfere with the thread of the discourse.² Real explanation in distinction from verbal

¹ *Examples.* *Eucharist* is a word derived from the Greek, and originally signifies *a giving of thanks*. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence" means that earnest labor and sacrifice are necessary to enter into heaven.

² "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," *i. e.*, make His sentiments your own, imitate His virtues, be patient, humble, charitable, as was Our Lord.

consists in pointing out the characteristic notes of the object in question. It may enumerate only the essential or give likewise the accidental notes. The first is done by logical definition,¹ whilst logical distinction shows the characteristic difference between the idea in question and other kindred ideas.² Besides these there is the oratorical elucidation and oratorical description. The former develops one or several notes of a concept.³ The latter is a clear and vivid presentation of the subject, so that the hearers behold it as it were in a picture. It is a word-painting of the subject in question, and enumerates many notes and characteristics, essential and accidental. If distinguished by vividness and realism, it was called by the ancients "*Notatio morum*"—characterization of morals. Such descriptive explanations are highly valuable, as they place the subject, as it were, tangibly before the hearers, and are calculated to give them an insight into their own hearts. But for such correct characterization of men's morals and motives it is necessary first to know them, to meet them in daily life, to observe them, and above all to know one's own heart. We find ex-

¹ Confession is an humble, sincere, and entire accusation of our sins to an approved priest, in order to obtain absolution for them from him.

² Calumny consists in attributing to our neighbor faults which he has not committed; detraction consists in revealing the hidden faults of our neighbor.

³ *V. g.*, if the note of an external sign in the idea of a sacrament were thus developed: "In each sacrament there is something external, visible, audible, or perceptible by some sense. You behold the priest in Baptism pouring out the water over the head of the infant, and you hear the sacred words he speaks at the same time. In Confirmation the bishop signs the forehead with chrism, accompanying the act with the corresponding sacramental words. In the Holy Eucharist we see the round, white host, and we hear the words of consecration. Thus it is in all the sacraments."

cellent examples of such descriptions in Holy Writ.¹

All explanations of religious ideas and truths must be made according to the sense and interpretation of the Church. They must be *true*, *i. e.*, contain only those notes that really belong to the subject.² They must be complete, clear, and precise, *i. e.*, they must contain all the notes that are necessary for a correct conception, and especially those which distinguish it from others with which it is or may be confounded.³ These explanations must be properly arranged to suit the natural order of the subject, as well as the rules of logic and psychology.⁴ In oratorical description it is necessary to guard against exaggeration and to avoid insignificant detail.

An explanation that is frequently of great value is the explanation by contraries. It is especially so in spiritual, supersensible subjects, which we can best explain by negating false concepts concerning them; for example: soul, liberty, the happiness of heaven. Then again in representing the value of things which are too little appreciated in everyday life, *v. g.*, health, peace. Or in explaining negative commandments or duties, *e. g.*, Thou shalt not bear false witness. Finally, in correcting false, imperfect, and confused ideas; as, for example, of

¹ For instance, of the good housewife, Prov. xxxi. 10; of the just and the wicked, Book of Wisdom, iv. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 1. Tit. i.; of peace and grace through Christ, Is. xi. 35, 49.

² Thus the explanation, "Indulgence is the remission of the punishment of sin," would be faulty, because indulgence is the remission only of the temporal punishment of sin.

³ It were incorrect to say that the sacrament of Penance remits the sins committed, because the addition is necessary: committed after baptism.

⁴ Thus in explaining the nature of prevenient actual grace, it would be natural to explain first *grace*, then *actual grace*, and finally *prevenient grace*.

economy and parsimony, generosity and prodigality, etc. It must be observed, though, that the preacher ought never to rest satisfied with a merely negative explanation, but ought always to supply the positive elements also to the minds of his hearers.

41. Means of Clearness, continued. Illustration.—This consists in particularizing a general abstract idea, *i. e.*, applying the general idea to a concrete particular individual case. It is a most effectual and often very necessary means of explanation. It is impossible for the ordinary class of people, even with great attention and effort, to obtain a clear understanding of abstract ideas, or of general truths, and they find a continued abstract mode of speech exceedingly uninteresting and irksome. But when the abstract truths are connected with their concrete realizations, when the preacher proceeds from the abstract to that which is visible and tangible to the hearers, then their attention is aroused and sustained, their memory assisted, their conviction confirmed, and the vividness of the discourse appeals to their affections and moves their will. This particularizing consists in resolving the general into the particular, the whole into its parts, the genus into its species. Thus St. Paul particularizes the statement, "Nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ," by asking: "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword?"

The Narrative is with many hearers still more adapted to explain an abstract idea. It may be taken from the Bible, from sacred history,—especially the Lives of the Saints,—from profane history, or from personal experience. But it must always be true, accurate, apt, and comparatively brief. The moral may be pointed in three ways: either by mere allusion, which is permissible

when the narrative is well known—thus the Church pictures the character of a good housewife in the Nuptial Mass; or the narrative may be related explicitly and circumstantially, as far as it is necessary to illustrate the subject and instruct the hearers. For example, instead of merely saying: "We ought in the sacrament of Penance to entertain sentiments similar to those of the prodigal son," we must relate the story and make the application in detail.

An **Image** is an illustration taken from a sensible object which is perfectly familiar to the hearers, and which serves to convey a clear and vivid mental perception of a supersensible object, on account of the similarity existing between both. Such images are the metaphor, allegory, simile, parable, fable, and the type. The advisability of using images for illustration is evident from the example of Christ, of the apostles,¹ the inspired writers of the Old and New Testament,² and the fathers and doctors of the Church.³ Besides rendering dogmatical and moral truths clear and intelligible, they lend a charm and vivacity to our explanations, impress them deeper upon the memory, and have a special power to move the affections and the will. If they are to serve their purpose, they must be apt, *i. e.*, there must be a real basis of comparison. They must be easily understood by the hearers, and therefore taken from their familiar surroundings. The points of comparison must be easily and clearly seen by the hearers, and to that end the essential features must be made conspicuous. Every image must be ap-

¹ Concerning Our Lord this statement requires no proof. See Hebr. vi. 7, 8; James v. 78.

² Isaias v.; Ezechiel xv. and xxxvii. 1-14.

³ Among these St. Chrysostom stands pre-eminent for his frequent use of this means of illustration.

propriate, and therefore contain nothing low, trivial, ignoble. Finally, they must be used with discretion and not too frequently.

With regard to these images, we may transcribe a happy passage from Jungmann.¹ "The entire visible world is a copy of the invisible world. In all its parts and elements it is an immense apparatus of images and symbols, calculated to instruct us concerning things invisible. But for the very reason that it is a copy it can never contain the full and entire reality. Matter is a framework far too narrow to enclose the plenitude of immaterial intelligible things. If, for example, Holy Writ designates the relations between ourselves and God by expressions taken from human affairs; if it calls us servants, children, heirs of God, and represents Our Saviour as our King, Physician, Shepherd, Brother, and Friend, these expressions are not to be considered merely allegorical and as conveying no real similarity with the things represented; but it would be false to suppose that they express the whole truth adequately and perfectly. We are servants of God, but His sovereignty is such that our mind shall never comprehend it on earth; Jesus Christ is our Brother and Friend, but these terms in their ordinary meaning but faintly indicate the relations between Our Saviour and ourselves. His love for us is superior not only in degree, but in kind and in its intrinsic nature. These images, then, can afford us but an approximate perception of the spiritual, some slight knowledge, as St. Thomas says,—an *aliqualis cognitio*."

The Parable illustrates a general truth by a special fictitious case, clothed in the form of narrative, portraying the manner of human thought and action. This form of instruction is among the earliest, and was frequently

¹ Beredsamkeit, vol. i., pp. 227, 228.

adopted by Our Lord. It is admirably adapted especially for the more abstract truths, and whenever a passion might prove a hindrance to the acceptance of a truth. It keeps alive the sense of truth and justice in the hearers, and hence renders it easy for them to form an impartial judgment, since they hear the case of another argued and not their own.¹ The parable is a happy and convenient dress for presenting a truth to him who cannot bear to see it in its naked reality; whilst on the other hand it reveals the truth to him who desires to see it unveiled. It stimulates curiosity and attention, and naturally leads the hearer to study its meaning and motive, thus facilitating again the memory in retaining it.

In catechetical instruction the biblical parables especially should be employed and explained, but the preacher as well as the catechist may profitably invent parables, provided these be simple, dignified, elevated in tone and comparison, brief, easily intelligible, and instructive. In explaining biblical parables, it is necessary to point out plainly and distinctly that religious truth which the parable serves to illustrate, name the points of resemblance, and summarize them briefly in the end, so as to present a complete view of the truth and its illustration. All the parables of Our Lord will serve as the highest models for this form of instruction.

Types are certain occurrences and customs of the Old Law, representing features of the person and of the realm of the Messiah; for example, the sacrifice of Abraham, the brazen serpent, the manna in the desert, Jonas in the belly of the whale, etc. This form of illustration is likewise very advantageous, and Christ and the apostles themselves have made use of it.² It is indispen-

¹ *Example.* Nathan and David. (2 Kings xii.)

² John, vi. 31; 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

sable, however, that the event referred to as the type be made perfectly familiar to the hearers.

ART. II.

THOROUGHNESS.

42. Nature and Necessity of Thoroughness.—The first step necessary for the preacher is to render the ideas which are the component elements of the truth intelligible and clear to the mind. The second is to show the nexus between the ideas, their agreement or disagreement, and thus to bring the mind to recognize and assent to the truth itself. This is done by showing the harmony which exists between the truth in question and other truths already acknowledged by the mind. This process is called argumentation. Sometimes a mere explanation of the terms is sufficient to convince man of a truth. This is the case, however, only with the most obvious truths, when both terms of the proposition are immediately recognized as identical and convertible. As a rule inductive or deductive argumentation is required to compel the assent of reason. Man's knowledge is not intuitive, but rational and discursive, and proceeds step by step from one truth to another. Moreover, it serves to throw additional light upon the ideas presented when they are exhibited in their reasons, and the ideas are then more readily appropriated and assimilated by the mind. These are general reasons for the necessity of argumentation. In practice, this necessity will be governed by the particular subject and aim of the discourse. Every truth that is treated "*ex professo*" ought to be confirmed by reasoning, whilst incidental truths do not generally require much support from argument. Another consideration to be taken is the capacity, the education, the necessities of the hearers according to

their different states of mind, their opinions and beliefs. Demonstration is always necessary when they have erroneous ideas on the subject, when they deny the truth directly or indirectly, or when they are in doubt or in a wavering state of mind concerning it; again when their faith is firm as yet, but exposed to many dangers on account of their surroundings. Lastly, those truths which are necessary for salvation either as means or by precept, as well as those which exercise a great influence on daily life, *v. g.*, the nature and excellence of the Church of Christ, the dignity of the supernatural state, the principal and most frequent dangers to faith and morals, ought ever to be supported by solid reasoning so as to secure a deep and firmly-grounded conviction on the part of the hearers.

The preacher, however, must guard against too much argument, as that would defeat the very purpose of argumentation and would not only presuppose—often erroneously—but even create doubt and disbelief.

Reasoning may proceed in two different ways, the one positive, the other negative. The positive method furnishes the reasons and arguments upon which the truth is based, whilst the negative removes the obstacles to conviction, namely, doubt, objection, prejudice, etc. The former is generally called demonstration, the other refutation.

43. Demonstration. Arguments from Revelation.—The arguments which serve to demonstrate a religious truth may be drawn from five different sources, *viz.*, revelation, reason, history, experience, human authority.

As the divine revelation is made known to us through Sacred Scripture and tradition, arguments from revelation will be derived from the same sources. Above all other classes of arguments these arguments stand pre-eminent, and it is but natural that revealed

truths should first of all find their reasons in the same revelation. Many of these truths have no other positive basis but that of revelation.

The arguments from Holy Scripture are of great authority with the people, as they bear the stamp of truth and credibility, and are calculated to secure the firmest possible mental conviction. The native simplicity of these arguments, too, renders them peculiarly adapted to the character of the popular mind. Of all arguments again they are the most familiar to the people. Moreover we have the example of Christ and of the apostles for the frequent use of them.¹

In the use of arguments from Holy Writ we must take care in every instance to select only those texts which, in the sense approved by the Church, are real proofs for the truth in question; for example, for the spirituality of God (John iv. 24): "*God is a spirit*;" the immutability of God (James i. 19): "*With Him there is no change, nor shadow of alteration*." If there are various texts to select from, those must be preferred which are clearest and most direct. If the text is not of itself clear it is necessary to explain it fully and show its bearing upon the subject. Even in the use of Scriptural texts a wise discretion is necessary, as their too frequent and indiscriminate use renders the argumentation cumbersome and less intelligible. When texts are used as arguments the literal sense generally is to be adopted and the mystical sense only when thus intended by the Holy Ghost, and sanctioned by the authority of the Church or the holy fathers. The text ought to be quoted verbatim, not in a mutilated form. To quote the chapter and verse may be advisable in some rare instances, when particular emphasis is required. Finally, it is unnecessary to quote the Latin before the

¹ Luke x. 26; Matt. xxii. 31; 1 Peter i. 19.

vernacular, but when done occasionally it helps to arrest the attention of the hearers and lends authority to the text.

Arguments from tradition possess equal authority with those from Scripture. They are derived from the Symbols of Faith, the decrees and canons of Ecumenical Councils, the ex-cathedra decisions of the Pope, *i. e.*, those given in his capacity as Supreme Pastor and Teacher of Christians, in matters of faith or morals, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit and addressed to the entire Church; from the official liturgical books of the Church; finally, from the unanimous teaching of the holy fathers. The same rules hold for these as for those from Scripture.

With regard to both these classes of arguments it will be useful occasionally to remind the faithful of their great authority, either as the words of the Son of God, or of the Holy Spirit, or of the Church of Christ, lest in the course of time many Christians grow into a habit of looking upon the teaching of the Church as human, and the texts of Scripture as merely wise and sententious sayings.

44. Arguments from Reason.—Demonstration from reason aims to show that a certain truth proceeds from the very nature of a thing, that it is a dictate of reason and conscience, or that it is in perfect harmony with the innermost sentiments of the human heart, or again that it is accepted by the common consent of mankind.

The employment of such arguments is not only permitted, but is often necessary, and is justified by the example of Holy Writ. Infidels profit by them to learn the credibility of revelation, its reasonableness, and the instinctive desire of man for supernatural instruction. Heretics are compelled from their own point of view, and from the truths they admit, to concede the

truths discussed or to reject the truths they hold. The faithful themselves derive from such arguments a clearer knowledge of their holy faith and an effective weapon against any assault made upon it.

45. Arguments from History and Experience.—Historical arguments may be used in the demonstration of dogmatical or moral truths. The divine justice in punishing sin may be effectually demonstrated from the history of the Jewish nation; the necessity of divine grace from the history of Paganism; the invincible character of the Church from the history of the persecutions waged against her. Individual experience as well as the experience of contemporaries may be used in demonstrating a truth, and frequently proves very efficient. An appeal to personal experience is advisable in cases where the mind and heart are set against conviction, *v. g.*, in proving the necessity of purity of conscience for interior peace. The hideous nature of vice is less evident to the minds of many Christians from the words of Holy Writ than from their own knowledge of the misery which vice entails. Another occasion is, whenever the observance of a certain law or duty seems impossible, the possibility is most easily demonstrated by the practice of those who fulfil it.

Caution must be used, though, never to appeal to experience which is one-sided, or false, or which is contradicted by other experience. It is evident again that the preacher is never permitted in such cases to reveal any secret or throw suspicion upon any one. In referring to his own experience in pastoral life, he should be careful to do so with great modesty and prudence, and never mention any experience as obtained through the confessional.

46. Arguments from Human Authority.—This class comprises above all the testimony of the holy fathers and

doctors of the Church, considered in and by themselves, and not as witnesses to tradition. This testimony may be profitably employed in explaining dogmatical truths, in treating of doctrines and propositions which are apparently new, or which are represented as innovations by heretics; in combating old prejudices and error; in censuring sins and vices, corroborating the censure by emphatic utterances of the fathers; especially in explaining texts of Holy Scripture. Only such passages, however, ought to be selected as are brief, clear, sententious, and pertinent.

The testimony of saintly ecclesiastical and spiritual writers likewise bears great authority; as the author of the *Imitation*, St. Theresa, Suarez, Bellarmine, etc.

Even the concessions made by non-Catholic writers may be used in evidence, though this should be done rarely and with circumspection.

Relative Value of Arguments.—Objectively, the arguments possess merit in the order named. With regard, however, to the capacity and disposition of the hearers, the order may sometimes be inverted as already intimated with regard to arguments from experience. As a rule, arguments from revelation, history, and experience rank first in order, although for a learned audience and for such as are of weak faith arguments from reason may sometimes take precedence. For mixed audiences it is advisable to vary the argument, so as to serve all. The main object of the preacher, however, must ever be to confirm supernatural faith, and therefore to present supernatural truth as based on supernatural reasons.

47. Method of Argumentation.—It is not sufficient to enumerate the arguments in support of any truth; they must be developed in a clear, logical, and oratorical manner. The audience must easily and readily perceive the connection between the argument and the

proposition. It is necessary to this end to elucidate obscure texts from Scripture or the holy fathers, by choosing more familiar terms and phrases with the same signification, by analyzing comparisons and analogies found in the text; by rendering the argumentative part more pointed and conspicuous through its contrary; finally, by analyzing the special terms and clauses of the text.

It is often advisable to develop fully a single or a few texts rather than to connect many unintelligible texts without any explanation.

Argumentation must be true; all faulty reasoning, all sophistry must be carefully avoided, and the texts given in the true signification which they bear in their context.

The argument must be presented in a logical manner, either after the inductive or the deductive method.

We prove by induction when we enumerate various individual cases in which the universal proposition is verified. The force of the argument will gain from the greater completeness of the induction.¹ It is absolutely certain when all the individual instances verify the proposition.² When the instances adduced in evidence

¹ *V. g.* Proposition: "Our Lord leaves no prayer, properly made, unheard." Inductive proof, developed oratorically: "I call upon you all that have sought help from Him in His life on earth. Answer me: has He ever forsaken you in any necessity? 'No,' answers the centurion, 'I besought Him to heal my servant and He healed him.' 'No,' answers the blind man, 'I cried out: Jesus, have mercy on me, and He restored my sight.' 'No,' answer Martha and Mary Magdalen, 'we sent to Him and He came and raised our dead brother to life.' 'No,' answers the good thief, 'I begged Him to remember me and He bade me enter into paradise.' 'No,' is the answer of thousands upon thousands, 'He has not left our prayer unheard; we prayed to Him and He granted our prayer.'"

² *Example.* Proposition: "All the apostles have suffered for Christ." Proof by complete induction: "St. Peter was crucified," etc. (to the last of the apostles).

are not of the same, but of similar nature, the argument is analogical.¹

The syllogism is the most common form of argument. It consists of three propositions so related to one another that two of them conceded, the third necessarily follows. The oratorical form of the syllogism, however, is rather the enthymeme.² It is the syllogism with one of the premises suppressed. Frequently the contracted conclusion merely is applied.³ The epichirema may likewise be employed with advantage, namely that form of the syllogism in which to one or both of the premises is added the reason of its truth.⁴ The dilemma, a syllogism in which the major is disjunctive and the minor shows how each of the alternatives establishes the proposition, often furnishes a very cogent argument.⁵ The sorites, a chain of propositions in which the predicate of each is the subject of the following, is a form of argument less available in the pulpit.

¹ *Example.* Proposition: "We must not lose courage in trials, because Jesus, our Helper, is ever near us." Proof from analogy: "Does a soldier lose courage at the side of a valiant general? Does the sailor give up hope when an experienced pilot holds the rudder? Does the child think of fear when led by the hand of a loving father? And should we fear when Jesus is ever with us and ever ready to come to our assistance?"

² *V. g.* "The Holy Scriptures tell us that God detests pride. Hence we are certain that pride is abominable to God." The major proposition, "Whatever the Holy Scriptures say is true," is omitted.

³ *Syllogismus contractus—propositio causalis.* "We must obey God, because He is our Sovereign Lord."

⁴ *Example.* "God cannot refuse to hear a just prayer, for He Himself says: 'Pray and you shall receive;' but the prayer that we offer to-day is a just prayer, since it is contained in the Lord's Prayer itself. Therefore," etc.

⁵ *Example.* "Are you Christians or not? If you are Christians, why do you transgress the laws of Christ; if you are not Christians, why do you usurp this glorious name?"

These arguments are not to be presented in the dry form of the class-room. The preacher must render them animated and attractive by varying their position or form—sometimes using the positive, sometimes the negative, now the interrogatory, again the explanatory form; by developing the different members of each proposition by inductive analogy, example, etc., and by employing, with a view to greater vigor, beauty, and effect, all the various figures of oratory, always preserving for his basis a logical form.

48. Refutation.—Besides the duty of confirming the truths of salvation there remains another, viz., that of removing all the obstacles to a firm mental conviction. There are three cases especially in which a formal refutation is advisable or even necessary.

First, when doubts or objections against faith, liberalistic and pernicious opinions and principles are being circulated in the congregation; secondly, when superstitious ideas and practices, or irreligious prejudices and errors, arise among the people; finally, when the false wisdom of the flesh and the world attempts to spread principles contrary to Christian morals and social doctrine. In the first two cases the refutation will bear principally a dogmatic, in the last case a moral (practical) character.

Of all such errors and objections, however, it is necessary to refute those only which are already known to the hearers or will certainly come to their knowledge, or, again, those which are of special practical importance, *v. g.*, which are directed against the fundamental truths of Christianity. Those objections which are unknown to the audience, or which are beyond their comprehension, or are very superficial and silly, require no public refutation.

The manner of refutation may be either direct or in-

direct. In direct refutation the objection, doubt, or error is expressly stated, analyzed, and its falsity exposed. To do this successfully, it is necessary to trace the error back to its source. The sources of error are as manifold as are the sources of truth. Reason, history, experience, human and even divine authority are invoked to support error as well as truth. The subjective sources, however, are ignorance, misinterpretation on the part of the understanding, and more frequently weakness or perversity on the part of the will. When the error is of an intellectual nature it may be reduced to the form of a syllogism, to discover whether the premises or the deduction be at fault. It will then be easy to prove from one or several of the sources of argument the entire or partial falsity of the objection, or to turn the very objection into an argument for the truth.¹

The direct refutation will thus

a. Deny, distinguish, or retort the objected argument; *e. g.*, the words of St. Peter (Acts x. 34, 35), instead of leading to the conclusion that all religions are equally good, prove a very forcible argument against the frivolous theories of modern indifferentism.

b. Frequently a testimony against the truth may be refuted by a higher testimony; for example, an argument from mere human authority by arguments from divine authority, or the competency of the witness may be denied.

c. The most efficient refutation often is that which by

¹ M. de Belley writes of the preaching of St. Francis de Sales: "The Protestants were lost in continual astonishment when they found that he proved the doctrines of the Catholic Church from the very same texts which their ministers adduced as overthrowing them. In drawing his proofs for the support of the truth from the very objections of the heretics, he changed the war from an offensive into a defensive one, and by this means won his adversaries even while he vanquished them."

analyzing and applying the objection exposes its absurdity, *v. g.*, in dealing with infidel and materialistic frivolities. (Examples plentiful in *v. g.*, Lambert: Notes on Ingersoll.)

When a perverse heart is the fountain-spring of falsehood, an argumentative refutation is useless, and the only effective method is to expose the source from which the objection springs. Instances of this kind are the denial of the existence of hell, of the immortality of the soul, of the justice of God.

Indirect refutation consists in explaining and confirming the truths that are assailed, and dwelling on their beauty and beneficence. This method has many advantages over the other. It refutes at once all objections that might be raised against the truth. It does not expose the hearer to the danger of learning an objection which before was unknown to him.

49. Prudence Necessary in Refutation.—The preacher, in refuting error, must be animated by true Christian charity and prudence. He must also take into due consideration his own position and that of his hearers, the various circumstances of time, place, etc.

As for his own person, he should avoid all appearance of subjectivity, as if he were defending his personal opinion; he must guard against introducing such objections as he cannot refute satisfactorily, either for want of time or for want of ability; he must avoid all bitterness and contempt, as the opponent is not to be put to shame, but convinced of the truth. In formulating the objection he must do justice to the opponent and not understate his argument.

Prudence forbids the preacher to root up the wheat with the cockle, and enjoins consideration for the weak. Popular opinions that are harmless may prove a source of danger when attacked at the wrong time. All er-

ror, superstition, and popular practice have some grain of truth concealed in them. Pastoral prudence will point out the truth, exhort the faithful to retain it, and expose the falsity only for the sake of cherishing truth and promoting the well-being of the people.

It is necessary to prevent, as far as possible, the spread of false and unchristian ideas, and to render the faithful proof against such contagion by rooting out the evils favorable to its propagation; such as immorality, practical indifferentism, defective instruction, frequent neglect of divine service or other religious duty, dangerous reading and associations, etc.

CHAPTER IV.

DEVELOPMENT OF MATTER, CONTINUED. APPEAL TO THE AFFECTIONS AND THE WILL.

ART. I.

APPEAL TO THE AFFECTIONS.

50. Idea and Necessity of such Appeal.—A mere correct presentation of truth, even though it compel recognition and assent, is not sufficient. The truth must be exhibited in its value and importance, its blessing, its effect upon our happiness or misery, so that it may also rouse the affections, conquer the heart, and sanctify life. Such development of a subject will be apt to move the affections when it is cordial, pathetic, affectionate, and unctuous.

The necessity of this development is patent. The affections, as well as the intellect, must be sanctified, and as they are so frequently the source of sin, it is the more necessary that they be restrained and led to embrace virtue. The affections are the most efficacious means of moving the will to good and of sanctifying it, because this faculty is drawn by the affections, *i. e.*, by the love of good and the detestation of evil. "*Trahit sua quemque voluptas.*" Even the intellect depends for its perfection upon the affections, since the delight one finds in truth prompts him to seek it. Hence the appeal to the affections is at the

same time a means of rousing and sustaining attention, facilitating conviction, and deeply impressing truth upon the mind.

A special necessity for the appeal to the affections may arise from the particular truth in question, or from the special purpose of the sermon; such as consolation, penance, fear, as in Lenten or mission sermons; or again from the callousness and indifference of the hearers, or from a perverse excitement of the affections, presumption, despair, and the like.

51. Different Kinds of Affections.—All affections may be classed into agreeable and disagreeable. Of the agreeable affections those of joy, hope, esteem, and love require special attention on the part of the preacher.¹

¹ *Joy* is called forth by a lively representation of a *present* good, of which the person knows himself in possession, *v. g.*, joy at the possession of the true faith (Cat. Rom. p. 1, c. 4, q. 7; c. 7, q. 6; c. 10, q. 4; c. 11, q. 9), at the incarnation, the ascension, the institution of the Church, the power of forgiveness of sin, etc. These joys must be excited in the faithful by the preacher. The joys and pleasures of the flesh, however, must be repressed and combated. *Hope* arises from the consideration of a *future* good, which will probably or certainly be attained. The hope that is necessary for the Christian—of forgiveness of sin, of the grace of God, of eternal salvation, etc.—must be excited and confirmed, whilst presumptuous hope, or too great reliance upon self or upon fellow-creatures, must be regulated and restrained. *Esteem* arises from a consideration of the good, the beautiful, the perfect, as related to persons. When referred to God it becomes adoration. This feeling must be cultivated with regard to God and holy things, to virtue and virtuous persons; but it must be regulated with regard to all things of merely relative value, such as honor, riches, etc. *Love* springs from the consideration of pleasing qualities in persons or things, or from the recollection of benefits received. The love of God is the highest love and the rule for the cultivation or restraint of every other love. All love which increases the love of God, as the love for spiritual things, for virtue, wisdom, etc., must be cherished and fostered; all love that is

Among the disagreeable affections, sorrow, shame, contrition, fear, contempt, hatred, and compassion must be roused or restrained, cultivated or regulated.¹

The indispensable condition for moving the affections is that the preacher himself be moved. He must create and foster these emotions in himself by prayer, meditation on divine truths, and daily practice. His heart must be warmed by faith, by zeal for the honor of God and the salvation of souls, and must be filled with holy sentiments.

As regards the manner of influencing the affections, this must correspond to the psychological laws of their origin. In general it is necessary to set before the hearer those objects, good or evil, in favor of which or against which the passions are to be aroused. These objects must be described in their influence upon the

contrary to this love of God,—self-love, carnal love,—must be suppressed; the love for temporal things, riches, honor, health, etc., must be made dependent on the love of God. It is the chief duty of the preacher to excite and strengthen in the hearts of the faithful this love of God and of virtue.

¹ *Sorrow, shame, and contrition* consist in a lively displeasure at a *present* evil. These affections are very useful for sanctification and must therefore be industriously cultivated, inasmuch as they spring from a consciousness of guilt or neglect of duty; they must be moderated when they have for their object temporal goods. *Fear* is a grave displeasure arising from the consideration of an *imminent* evil. The fear necessary for the Christian is the fear of God's justice, of sin and the dangers of sin. Fear of man, however,—human respect,—must always be combated and suppressed. *Despair* is a violent displeasure at the real or supposed impossibility of obtaining a good. It is salutary when it concerns the natural powers of man for supernatural ends, whilst the despair of God's power or mercy is a sin against the Holy Ghost. *Contempt, anger, and hatred* are to be cultivated only against sin. *Compassion* for the sufferings of Our Lord or His Blessed Mother or for our fellow-men is a great means of furthering the love of God and of our neighbor.

weal or woe of the hearer, in their value, utility, and blessing, in their goodness, beauty, truth, grandeur, etc.; or, on the other hand, in their vanity, deformity, wickedness, harmfulness, etc.

The objects must correspond to the nature of the emotions the preacher wishes to arouse. These emotions should always be of a religious nature, or if they are less noble (moral, sensible, sympathetic), they are always to be elevated and dignified into religious emotions. To excite, for instance, the religious feelings of reverence, adoration, obedience, love, and gratitude to God, the pastor must set before his hearers the infinite perfection of God, His majesty, power and greatness, wisdom and holiness, love and mercy, etc., as these are manifested by the bounties of God, the mysteries of the incarnation, redemption, passion, etc. To excite the moral feeling of self-respect and elevate it to the dignity of a religious feeling, he will place before them their high dignity as images of God, children of God, heirs of His kingdom, brethren of Christ, temples of the Holy Ghost, objects of His tender providence, clients of His holy angels, etc.

These representations must not be made in a dry, abstract form, but in a clear, vivid, animated, true, and thorough manner, not neglecting the circumstances of time, place, manner, and dwelling in detail on the individual characteristics.

The rhetorical means for such representation are especially the various kinds of amplification: concentration (*congeries*), comparison, word-painting, and embellishment (*expositio*). Concentration consists in collecting the various elements of an idea, connecting them closely, and presenting them as far as possible together at the same time. Examples: 2 Cor. xi. 18; Rom. ix. 1-5; Hebr. xi. 32. Comparison intensifies the

idea by similarity, parallelism, analogy with another greater and well-known instance. Examples: Lament. iv. 6; Matth. xi. 21; Ps. ci. 25-28; Hebr. ix. 13, 14. Oratorical painting is a graphic description of a fact with particular reference to the circumstances of time, place, person, manner, etc. Examples: Exod. xiv. 15-31; John xi. 1-45. Oratorical embellishment (amplification in a stricter sense) is allied to synonymy, in that it strings together sentences that express nearly the same thought, in order to impress this thought more vividly. Examples: Is. liii. 4-6; "Exultet" on Holy Saturday; St. Bernard, 2 Hom. Super Missus est. Et nomen Virginis Maria: Stella Maris; Is. lxxv. 11.

The oratorical forms of speech, useful for the purposes of appealing to the affections, are: repetition, inversion, change of position of words in a sentence for the sake of emphasis, rhetorical interrogation, apostrophe, exclamation, prayer.

ART. II.

APPEAL TO THE WILL.

52. Necessity of this Appeal.—The fruit of all preaching must be the moving and thereby the sanctification of the will; all else is but a means to this end. Divine truth must be so presented that it influences, not only the intellect and the affections, but, above all, the will. To this end it is necessary to develop the practical side of the truth and its application to the life of the hearer. The moral condition of the hearer will be either the state of sin, *i. e.*, the state of the will turned away from God and loaded with mortal sin; or the state of justice, that state of the will in which it is united to God, but not free from venial sins and faults; or, finally, the state of perfection, the condition of a holy will, which

practises virtue in an heroic degree, and endeavors, as far as possible, to avoid even venial faults and imperfections.

The sinner stands in greatest need of the practical development and representation of truth, to be thereby brought back to the state of justice. The weak, however, likewise require moral exhortation to preserve and confirm them in the state of justice, and to raise them as far as possible to the state of perfection. The perfect also profit by it to maintain themselves in that state, and to grow still more perfect.

Constant moralizing is detrimental to the sanctification of souls. It interferes with the other duties of religious instruction, creates prejudice, and often produces harm from the one-sided manner in which it is done, some virtues and sins being constantly treated, to the neglect of others equally or more important, or subjects introduced the knowledge of which may become to many souls a source of danger.

53. Positive Method of Moving the Will.—A positive or a negative method may be employed to move the will. The positive method consists in using all those means which determine the will of the hearer to embrace and practise the truth; the negative one, in preventing or removing the obstacles to such determination.

The means of determining the will are direct or indirect. The direct means are all those motives which ordinarily lead the will to a certain determination; the indirect are the means of virtue, which dispose the will favorably to determine itself.

The motives may be of a preparatory nature, or directly bring about the self-determination. The preparatory motives are prerequisites for the efficiency of the direct and immediate motives. They are confidence

and courage; for he that doubts and is diffident of his ability to carry out the determination will never arrive at a firm resolution. The preacher, then, must arouse and support this courage and confidence of his hearers. To this end he will endeavor to convince them of the native power of the free will from their own consciousness and from the experience of others, and likewise of the far greater force of the will when sustained by the grace of God, which is granted to all those who seek it.

Direct and immediate motives call forth the resolution of the will. All the moral obligations of man are expressed in the law of charity: "Thou shalt love 1) the Lord thy God above all things; thou shalt love 2) thy neighbor as 3) thyself." To facilitate this triple charity, God has endowed the nature of man with a three-fold inclination: 1) the *religious-moral* inclination, which draws him to God and to all that he recognizes as good; 2) the *sympathetic* inclination, which draws him to those of his kind, and 3) the *desire of happiness*, which seeks his own well-being. All the motives of man are thus finally reduced to love; what man loves, that will he seek, for that will he labor, and that he will practise. But it is a true and holy love which must actuate man,—the true love of God, of his neighbor, and of himself.

To excite and prompt the will to action by means of the love of God the preacher must address himself to the religious inclination of man, and represent the nature of God, and His relation to the world and to man. He is the most perfect Being, infinite Goodness and Love, the highest and most amiable Good, the most perfect Model for man (Matt. v. 48). He is the Creator of the world, of all that exists; the Preserver and Sovereign Lord of the world and of man in particular. He is our Father and Friend, our Lawgiver, our Judge,

our eternal reward. Especially must the preacher dwell on all the divine bounties to man. God has given, and every day, aye, every moment gives to man natural and supernatural life. He has given to the world His only begotten Son. An inexhaustible source of the most powerful and urgent motives is furnished by the incarnation, life, suffering, death, and glory of Our Redeemer. God has given to man His Holy Spirit, the Holy Church governed by this Spirit, and in this Church He has given him all graces, the Holy Sacrifice, the sacraments, etc. He has given Mary and the saints as models and mediators for man; He will finally grant us a glorious resurrection and eternal happiness. All these motives are developed by the Church in the course of the ecclesiastical year, and the preacher should apply them for the sanctification of souls.

The moral inclination in man likewise leads him to the love of God. It must therefore be made use of for the purpose of moving the will, and the inner voice of conscience should often be the subject of reference by the preacher; it should, so to speak, be rendered audible, and its authority enforced. The preacher should therefore frequently appeal to the conscience of his hearers, to their dignity as men and greater dignity as Christians, to the testimony of others, especially of those who command authority in the eyes of his hearers; the good, noble, great in thought and sentiment he should paint in beautiful, living colors; the evil, wicked, mean, and contemptible in their hideous and detestable forms, and thus lead his hearers themselves to pass sentence upon them.

Through the motive of charity the preacher can influence the will of his hearers, by appealing to the sympathetic instinct in man, so that the affections of love, compassion, sympathy, gratitude, be excited in

them. To do this, let him describe the condition of others in such a manner that the hearers feel it as if it were their own; let him show that all men stand in need of the good will and love of their fellow-men; let him represent the beauty, the blessing, the happy fruit of mutual benevolence, the evil consequences, on the other hand, that follow from the lack of charity. He must over and over again hold up to the consideration of the faithful the supreme Christian law of charity, the fulfilment of which is the mark of every true Christian, enjoying the most blessed promises, whilst the most severe punishments attend its violation.

He will influence the will of the hearer by appealing to his innate desire for happiness, when he considers the consequences of good and evil for time and eternity, and from this consideration draws the most powerful motives of virtue. When he dwells on the temporal consequences, however, he must always represent them in relation to God, His infinite justice, mercy, wisdom, and holiness, so as not to inspire selfish and sensual motives. The form of such representations may and ought to be vivid and impressive, yet never deviate from truth and reality.

The preacher may with great profit illustrate all such moral arguments by examples from sacred and profane history, lives of individuals, the experience of the hearers themselves, etc. These examples may be of an encouraging, or, if the case demand, of a terrifying nature; they may be referred to at times by mere allusion, at other times be explicitly proposed; all examples, however, should be suited to the age, condition, mental acquirements, prejudices, and even to the weaknesses of the audience. Examples of persons of equal age, equal condition, and of the same country are apt to make a far deeper impression than others which appear to us,

as it were, at a great distance. Encouraging examples ought, as far as possible, to be taken from the lives of such saints as are well-known to the hearers and held in great veneration by them. They must ever be related without any exaggeration, and presented in such a manner that the hearers will be able to follow the example in their own lives. Terrifying examples should not, as a rule, be taken from the lives of persons in high position, demanding respect and reverence, lest it might lead to the contempt of all persons in such station. Great caution must likewise be exercised against employing any representations that may excite sensuality, as also against acquainting the hearers with the manner or means of committing sin. The attractions of vice must never receive attention, excepting when it is necessary to expose their deceptive nature, but the sad and disastrous consequences of sin must be impressed upon the mind and heart of the hearers.

All these means of moving the will produce only momentary effect. The disposition of the will towards virtue must be made habitual. This is attained by true Christian asceticism, or the proper use of the Christian means of virtue. The first and indispensable duty of such Christian virtue is that of self-denial, accompanied by a holy reverence for the laws of God and His Church, and a sincere and affectionate love for God and His Christ. The preacher must therefore employ all the powers of sacred eloquence to lead his hearers to the practice of religious exercises, especially prayer, regular attendance at divine worship, frequent reception of the sacraments, great veneration of the Mother of God and of the saints, etc., and ever fan the flame of these religious devotions.

54. Negative Method of Moving the Will. Removal of Obstacles to the Determination of the Will.—These obstacles

are the temptations that arise partly from within, partly from without, springing from the triple fountain—the concupiscence of the eyes, of the flesh, and of the pride of life. This threefold concupiscence is opposed to the threefold virtuous inclination in man: viz., the religious-moral and the sympathetic inclination, and the desire for happiness.

The pride of life apparently pays honor to the dignity of man and would live suitably to this dignity; but it soars above itself, will not acknowledge God as the author of all the gifts which human nature or the individual possesses, and declines to pay Him due homage. The concupiscence of the eyes looks upon the riches of the world as the last end of man, or desires them as means for other inferior ends, and in this desire disregards justice and charity towards fellow-men. The concupiscence of the flesh preaches a false happiness, representing an apparent good as true, a good of relative value as possessing absolute value, illicit pleasures as licit, etc.; or it denies the necessity of virtue for happiness or the miserable consequences of vice.

All pretexts, excuses, and temptations against observing the law of God spring from this threefold source.

Such impediments to the determination of the will for good must be removed, or, if this be impossible, rendered ineffectual, which may be done either directly or indirectly.

Indirectly the preacher may present such strong and effectual motives for the practice of a truth or law that the contrary motives will thereby be paralyzed. For effectual direct counteraction of these false motives it is necessary to study their sources. These may be found in an error of the mind, or in a perverse will and heart, or in a passion which is palliated by all manner of

excuses. In the first case the preacher must refute the error, after the manner already laid down (§ 49). In the other case he must point out the instances in which a perverse heart is apt to turn the will away from the law of God to sin. The most frequent of these is when the fulfilment of the law requires any extraordinary sacrifice on our part. Furthermore he must instruct his flock that whenever they are necessitated to make a formal resolution they form the intention of desiring only that which God wills; that in general they form the habit of remembering in times of temptation the presence of God, the hour of their death, or the judgment of God, asking themselves what they will then wish to have done in a certain instance. Finally, the preacher must oppose to these false excuses the indubitable word of God.

CHAPTER V.

ARRANGEMENT OF SERMON-MATTER.

ART. I.

ARRANGEMENT OF A SERIES OF SERMONS.

55. Utility and Necessity of Arrangement.—A disposition or proper arrangement of the sermon-matter in a natural, systematic form, in proper succession and connection of the various parts, is necessary, or at least highly advantageous, for the purposes of instruction.¹ It facilitates the perception of the truth by giving a clear insight into the subject, and the connection and relation of its various parts; it assists especially the memory, and prepares the way for conviction and for the proper disposition of the will and of the affections. On the other hand, want of order always produces confusion and obscurity, creates disgust, and is opposed to all edification. A proper arrangement of his matter, therefore, must be the constant aim of the preacher, and that with regard to the succession of his sermons, as well as to the parts of the individual sermon.

56. Reasons and Rules for Serial Sermons.—The Sunday sermons, as a rule, bear no relation one to another. The subject is often chosen according to the momentary pleasure of the preacher and accidental circumstances, without a thought of unity, order, and connection, so that the truths of religion are preached piecemeal,

¹ III. Conc. Plen. Balt., No. 216.

neither in their connection nor in their entirety, and as a result many members remain in perpetual ignorance on important points of their holy religion. In general, then, such a disconnected and unsystematic method is to be rejected. When it is observed, the preacher should always keep at least careful and detailed note of all the sermons preached; he should have before him a table of the whole matter of instruction, and continually compare it with these notes, to be able to give an account to himself of all that he has said and that remains to be said, so as to omit nothing of importance. Otherwise, it is inevitable that some subjects will be repeated *usque ad nauseam*, whilst others equally or perhaps more momentous will never be treated.

Connected series of sermons, then, are not only preferable, but necessary. For if the faithful are obliged to learn all the truths of religion, to believe them, and carry them out in practice, their instructor is no less bound to teach them all truth: "*Docentes eos servare omnia.*"

But the preacher himself derives great advantages from this method; he is rid of the frequent embarrassment experienced in selecting his subject; he easily finds an exordium for his sermon; he is secure against repetition and falling into the habit of commonplace; dogma and moral are naturally and easily interchanged; a few years of practice suffice to acquaint him thoroughly with the whole range of religious doctrine and to equip him with a fund of material. In fact, there is no easier means of a thorough education and training of the young preacher than such a practice extending through five or six years. For such a connected series of sermons he will require a plan, according to which the entire subject-matter will be arranged in proper order.

With reference to this matter itself, the reason of the plan will be either extrinsic or intrinsic; extrinsic ac-

cording to the circumstances of time or place, *e. g.*, the life of Our Lord in chronological or topical succession; intrinsic, according to the order of the catechism and the gospels, prescribed by the Church for Sundays and holy-days.

But the subjective necessities and condition of the particular congregation must also be taken into consideration in formulating this plan. From this point of view those truths will be granted the first place the knowledge of which is most suited to the necessities of the faithful.

These necessities may vary greatly in different communities. There may be congregations where the Christian faith is either greatly shaken or, at least, in great danger; others, again, may be surrounded by many dangers to Christian morality. In the former places the doctrinal part will necessarily be treated first; in the latter, the moral and ascetical part, *viz.*, the commandments of God, sin, virtue, prayer, the sacraments, etc. Those that are most necessary will precede all others; among those that are equally necessary, the easier ones will take precedence; those, again, which are prerequisite for the right understanding of others will be treated before these other truths.

On these principles various plans may be formed: thus for individual prominent doctrines, such as the Church, the sacrament of Penance, the Holy Eucharist, the theological virtues, individual, sinful, and vicious habits; or again for the whole domain of religious truth, either according to the order laid down by the Church in the catechism and in the gospels, or according to an individual plan, such as that of St. Thomas: *Credenda* (mysteries of faith); *Agenda* (commands and counsels); *Vitanda* (sin); *Speranda* (grace and glory); *Timenda* (punishments of divine justice).

ART. II.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL SERMON.

57. The Parts of a Sermon.—Every discourse, however simple, will be bound to three parts: the beginning, the main part, and the conclusion. The preacher must say in the beginning of what he is to speak; he must then treat his subject or actually speak of it—the main part; finally, he must make certain deductions for his hearers. The first part is generally called the introduction; the second, the body of the discourse; the third, the peroration or conclusion.

58. The Introduction is that part of the discourse which is preparatory to the subject, and in itself contains three parts: viz., the exordium, the proposition, and the division. In the pulpit a text from the Holy Bible is generally quoted at the head of the discourse, and connected in a suitable manner with the subject.

The use of the text dates back to the first ages of the Church, when short chapters of Holy Writ were read in the Christian assemblies and afterwards explained by the bishop. The practice of opening with a text is of manifold utility. It at once authenticates, so to speak, the sacred character of the preacher as the herald of the divine word; it serves as a basis for the entire discourse, and because of its brevity may by repetition be more deeply impressed upon the minds and hearts of the hearers.

The text ought to be complete, not a mere catchword, not mutilated, not too brief nor too long, and as a rule taken in the literal sense. It ought to be pertinent, bearing an easy and natural relation to the subject. It ought generally to be taken from Holy Scripture, and if

a reading from Scripture precedes the sermon, it ought to be taken from the reading; when, however, the particular reading does not furnish a suitable text, it may be taken from any other part of Scripture. Even a text from the Creed or from a liturgical prayer or hymn may be used when for a particular subject an apt quotation from Scripture cannot be found.

The purpose of the exordium is to show the connection between the subject and the given occasion (feast, Gospel, extraordinary occurrence, etc.), to prepare for the easier and better understanding of the subject, and to rouse the interest and attention of the hearer. The other purpose, mentioned in profane rhetoric, of disposing the hearers favorably towards the speaker, is rarely practical in sacred eloquence excepting, for instance, when the hearers are prejudiced against a certain doctrine, or when the preacher must attack abuses, bad practices and habits, and the like. The most successful means "*ad captandam benevolentiam*" is the noble character of the preacher, proven by truly priestly sentiment, pure zeal for the salvation of souls, and operative charity for the congregation.

The introduction ought not to be too general, but rather specific, *i. e.*, suitable to the particular subject in question. It ought to be natural, easy, and unaffected, comparatively brief (not exceeding the eighth part of the sermon); likewise not too far-fetched, leading up to, but not anticipating, the subject; finally, it should be modest, simple, and well prepared.

The exordium may be taken from the subject itself (*ex visceribus causæ*) without encroaching upon the treatment; for example, a sermon on the Means of Humility may be introduced by a definition or description of the nature or the necessity of this virtue; or from the contrary—speaking, for instance, on Temperance

the preacher may open with a description of the consequences of intemperance; or it may be taken from the circumstances of time, place, etc., circumstances either of the preacher and the audience—especially suitable on extraordinary occasions—or circumstances of the subject of the sermon, *v. g.*, of the text chosen, etc. The abrupt exordium is to be used very rarely, and only when it is entirely justified by the extraordinary circumstances and the emotions of the audience and the speaker.

The ordinary source of the exordium is the text chosen, which is to be explained and applied to the subject of the sermon. This explanation is either historical, narrating the occasion or the event when the words were first spoken, or exegetical, developing briefly the meaning of the words.

The exordium is followed by the announcement of the subject of the sermon—the proposition. The clear and distinct enunciation of the subject is necessary, especially in doctrinal or instructive discourses, so that the hearers may direct their attention exclusively to it and be enabled to view it in its unity, and to understand it easily and readily. Only in brief and occasional discourses this formal announcement may be omitted. The form of such announcement is generally declaratory, as: “Sin is the greatest of all evils,” but may also be interrogatory or titular, as: “Which is the true Church of Christ?” “Let us consider the Passion of Our Lord.”

The proposition must be precise and adequate, and couched in clear, popular words, brief and concise in form.

The division of the subject into its parts—the truths or ideas which it contains—serves the same purpose of aiding the understanding and memory. It must be logically correct, *viz.*, adequate, the parts must be ex-

clusive of each other, and neither part must equal the whole. The parts must moreover be arranged in a psychological order, that is, that which engages the intellect must precede that which addresses itself to the affections and the will. There must likewise be a certain gradation in the succession of parts, so that the sermon will constantly gain in interest and importance. Lastly, the division ought to be brief, clear, simple, and natural.

59. The Body of the Sermon.—It consists of one or more (at most three) parts. These parts may contain subordinate introductions, divisions, conclusions, transitions, and exhortations.

The sub-introductions and sub-divisions have the same purpose with respect to the individual parts of the treatise, and should possess the same qualities as the exordium and the main division of the sermon. The principal character of the body of the discourse will be either explanation, argument, or refutation; or else exhortation. In the former case it will be distinguished by clearness and thoroughness, in the latter by unction and vigor.

The partial conclusions are brief and forcible repetitions of the previous matter, at the end of every part of the sermon, for the purpose of impressing the main points upon the memory, of concentrating as in a focus the fulness and vigor of a truth already expressed. They should be animated, unctuous, brief, and concise.

The sub-transitions are intended to connect the individual parts and thus secure the unity of the subject. These should be easy and natural, and in terms calculated to exhibit the unity of the sermon and to direct the attention of the hearer to what follows.

60. The Peroration must be in harmony with the sermon it concludes. It recapitulates and summarizes the

parts of the discourse and those arguments that are most conducive to persuasion. It thus impresses them more deeply and firmly upon the mind and heart, and leaves a vivid impression of the whole subject in the soul of the hearer. This recapitulation ought to be brief, rapid, and vigorous. The peroration furthermore should express the special fruit of the discourse, or the practical conclusions and resolutions which flow from the subject. Finally, the peroration contains the earnest and zealous exhortation to apply and practise the truth in daily life. It should grow to the end in earnestness and fervor. The peroration may be concluded by the words of the text, quoted at the outset, or by a resolution, a request, a promise, by the doxology, or by a prayer.

CHAPTER VI.

STYLE AND DELIVERY.

ART. I.

STYLE.

61. Definition. Various Kinds and General Character of Style.—Style may be defined as the peculiar manner in which a man expresses his conceptions by means of language. It will differ according to the mental conditions of the audience, and again according to the various ends of instruction. For the ordinary people a plain and simple style will be required, whilst for the better educated classes a more elevated and polished style will be proper. For an instructive discourse the plain and unadorned style is the most suitable; for a pathetic sermon the poetical style with its ornaments of tropes and figures is most appropriate; for a sermon whose principal aim is to move the will the rhetorical or solemn style is best adapted.¹

The exterior form, as well as the subject-matter of the sermon, must be made subservient to the highest end of Christian instruction, viz., the sanctification of man by truth. Hence this form, *i. e.*, the style of the sermon, must correspond to this end; objectively, by being true, correct, and accurate; subjectively, by making use of suitable and effective language. In all cases,

¹ "De una eademque re et *submis*se dicitur, si docetur; et *temperate*, si prædicatur (praised) et *granditer*, si aversus inde animus, ut convertatur, impellitur."—S. Aug., De Doctrina Christ., l. iv., c. 19.

therefore, the sanctification of *all* remains the principal object of the style, and hence its principal and invariable characteristic will be simplicity and popularity, without any attempt at mere oratorical glitter. The word of God operates rather through the native force of truth than through the extrinsic ornament of style. On the other hand, all affected display has a tendency to weaken the strength of truth and destroy its efficiency. "My speech and my preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in showing of the spirit and power." This simplicity does not interfere with the use of figures and metaphors where these are conducive to a certain end, but it forbids the use of such ornament for the sake of mere display.

Simplicity of style, however, must never degenerate into vulgarity. It is a serious mistake to suppose that a popular style consists in the use of ordinary, not to mention slang, phrases and expressions. The language of the street is not the language of the pulpit. A truly popular style is the natural result of unity of object, and of natural simplicity, order, and logical arrangement of ideas, combined with intelligent demonstration, precise expression, correct position of words, reasonable length of sentences, etc.

Such popularity must distinguish every sermon, whatever be the complexion of the audience to whom it is addressed. It is based on the endeavor to lead all men to the knowledge and love of truth, and to communicate it to them in a manner suitable to their character and capacity.

Pope Gregory the Great gives the true principles that ought to determine the general style of every sermon (*De Cura Past. Proleg.*): "The language of the teacher must be adapted to the character of the au-

dience, so that the necessities and capacity of each individual be suited, and at the same time the audience be edified."

62. Particular Qualities of Style. Grammatical Qualities.—The style of the discourse must satisfy the laws of language, the purpose of instruction, and the principles of good taste, and hence we may speak of the grammatical, oratorical, and æsthetical qualities of style.

In *grammatical* respects the style must be correct. The forms of expression must be framed and changed (declined, conjugated, constructed, compounded) according to the rules of grammar.

The style must be pure, *i. e.*, only such words must be used as are vernacular and in common use. Hence all *barbarisms* must be excluded, and all words derived from a foreign language, except when there is no word to express the particular idea in question, and the anglicized foreign word is commonly understood. All *obsolete* words as well as newly-coined words and expressions; all *provincialisms* and unrefined expressions and phrases are likewise inadmissible, although terms and sayings in common use, if they be not inelegant, may be employed. "It is better," says St. Augustine,¹ "that we be censured by the grammarians than not understood by the people."

63. The Oratorical Qualities of Style serve to secure the principal aims of all instruction, viz., to enlighten the mind, to move the affections and the will. The first of these qualities comprises *accuracy* and *precision*, *clearness* and *perspicuity* of style in words, word-formation, metaphors, and phrases. The expression must therefore above all be accurate, true; it must represent the objective truth, and that precisely, and signify neither more

¹ In Ps. cxxxviii.

nor less than is to be signified according to the teaching of the Church. Faults opposed to this quality of style are *obscurity, equivocation, ambiguity*. The first of these faults arises from a bad arrangement, complicated structure, or too great length of sentences, etc. Equivocation and ambiguity leave the hearer in doubt between different meanings of a word. When the meaning of an equivocal term cannot be gathered from the context, the term should not be used; ambiguity will nearly always be avoided by a correct arrangement of words. Moreover, the expression must be known to the hearers in its true meaning and suited to their capacity, their education, and language. For this end it is necessary to use the terminology introduced by the Church and in common use among the faithful: Sacrament, grace, mortal and venial sin, Trinity, etc. Terms that are less familiar to the audience, when they occur in quotations from Holy Scripture or from the holy fathers, must be explained. All faults against purity of style offend likewise against this quality, as do in general all unintelligible, unpopular, technical, and abstract terms and phrases.

The suavity or unction of style is characterized: *a*) by dignified, elevated, soulful expressions, which not only represent the idea, but at the same time the beauty and goodness, or the detestable and contemptible nature of the object, as: *detestable* vice, *tender* mercy, *sacred* marriage-tie, etc.; *b*) by an appropriate use of such figures as appeal especially to the affections, viz., exclamation, conjuration, apostrophe, personification, reticence, interrogation, etc.; *c*) by a subjective tone of speech, by directness (the preacher should address the hearers as if conversing with them, using such figures and phrases as continue and constantly renew the intercourse between the preacher and his

audience; for example, rhetorical question, answer, concession, doubt); finally, *d*) by expressions of compassion, of sympathy, affection, etc.: "My dear Christians;" "It is with deep regret;" "I rejoice," etc.

An unctuous style is nothing else than the expression of that "charity which is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost;" it is the language of piety, of zeal,—the highest quality of sacred eloquence. It is called *unction* because it flows over as a gentle force into language, and through it into the hearts of the faithful, as oil and balsam into the pores of the body that is anointed. It is an effect of grace and not of rhetorical endeavor.

The only means of acquiring this unctuous style is intimate union with Christ,—the Anointed,—prayer, Christian asceticism, and freedom from worldly sentiment. Rules of style can be of service only in a negative way, removing the impediments to unction, such as affectation, sentimentality, etc., as well as a cold and abstract, indifferent, and trivial manner.

Against the *religious* character of style the preacher would grievously offend by using unworthy, mean, low, frivolous expressions, witticisms, sarcasm, etc. The word of God is infinitely venerable and holy, and the language therefore that is used in proclaiming it ought likewise to be dignified and elevated, so as to reveal the sublimity of the word of God and inspire reverence for it. St. Cæsarius of Arles¹ says that "the word of God is not less great than the Body of Christ." As the priest, then, would not dare to envelop the Body of Christ in unclean linen, so he must not dare to present the word of Christ in an unbecoming exterior.

Still another oratorical quality of style is energy (*gravitas*). The language of sacred oratory must portray the gravity and force of the subject, as well as the firm-

¹ Serm. 95.

ness of conviction and fixedness of the will, in a manner becoming to religion.

The first prerequisite on the part of the preacher for energy of style is a deep conviction of the divine truths he teaches, and the determination to impress them as strongly as possible. This desire alone will infallibly place upon the lips of the speaker burning words; without it he will ever speak but superficially. He must therefore renew this resolution before every discourse, so as to have it clearly and explicitly before his mind.

Other means of speaking forcibly are: *a*) brevity and succinctness of expression. Everything unessential and weak ought therefore to be discarded, so that the main ideas appear more marked and striking, and the flow of language be more rapid and lively; *b*) proper application of lively figures, such as *conduplicatio*, *inversio*, etc.; *c*) avoiding all tautology; *d*) employing expressions of authority, as: "Amen, I say to you;" of power: "Let there be light;" of firmness and assurance: "Heaven and earth shall pass away." The preacher has an inexhaustible source of strong and energetic expression in the text of Sacred Scripture and of the holy fathers.

Faults against energy of style are: an affected extreme gravity, not suited to the subject, or sustained too long; and, on the other hand, a stiff as well as a too diffuse and watery style. The religious moral tone of the sermon would be seriously injured by any expressions of presumption, passion, anger, hatred, contempt, irony, etc.

64. Æsthetical Qualities of Style.—These qualities lend beauty and grace to style, and thus influence the heart and through it the will of the hearer; they awaken and keep alive his attention, interest, and favorable disposition. They are not so necessary as the oratorical quali-

ties, and may even become harmful if they are preferred to the truth itself, and made the end instead of the means. The more important æsthetical qualities of style are:

a) Naturalness; *i. e.*, that character which suits the style to the subject, the special end, and circumstances of the discourse, as well as to the character, age, position, and disposition of the speaker, and to the character and conditions of the audience.

b) Variety and change in words, images, figures, and kinds of style. All monotony is tiresome.

c) Euphony in words and phrases, in periods and their members. Rhythm consists in connecting the individual words in a manner pleasing to the ear, in arranging the individual sentence symmetrically, and, if possible, concluding it with a sonorous word.

d) Vivacity of style. This is attained by concrete sensible representations, full of imagery; by introducing everything, so far as possible, as present, living, speaking, and acting, and placing it, as it were, visibly and tangibly before the audience, especially by a judicious use of tropes and figures.

ART. II.

ELOCUTION.

65. Definition and Division of Delivery.—Delivery signifies the expression of thought, sentiment, or resolution by means of the voice, mien, and gesture. With the sacred orator it is the perfect expression of the truths that live in him, presented visibly and audibly to the hearer.

The importance of a good delivery is self-evident. Tone of voice, looks and gestures interpret ideas and

emotions better even than words do. Elocution often determines the meaning of whole sentences, supplies the defect of expression, and lends a special force and fervor to the sermon. Even ordinary sermons will gain much from a good delivery, whilst the most solid and scrupulously elaborated sermons always suffer from a poor delivery.

The primary conditions for acquiring a good delivery are: *a*) a noble, truly pious, and priestly disposition; a lively and firm conviction of the truth of which the preacher wishes to convince others; *b*) a pure zeal for the salvation of souls, which renders every tone and action sincere and cordial; *c*) complete mastery of the subject, for otherwise the preacher's entire thought and attention will necessarily be devoted to the matter, and it will be impossible to bestow any attention upon the delivery. Besides these fundamental prerequisites, diligent practice and discreet imitation of model speakers will greatly assist in acquiring a proper delivery. Every preacher ought to subject his delivery to a rigid criticism, and endeavor to correct any mistakes that he himself observes or are pointed out to him by a friendly critic. Delivery comprises elocution and action, or gesture.

66. Necessary Qualities of Elocution.—The voice is the principal instrument for communicating the thoughts and affections of men to fellow-men. It is evident, then, that a good vocal delivery is of the highest importance in the communication of divinely revealed truth. The first quality essential to a good delivery is a loud and distinct enunciation. The tone of the voice should be sufficiently loud to reach the whole audience. The middle pitch of the voice is the one generally to be used in public speaking. A frequent failing in this respect is after speaking a part of the sentence in a sufficiently loud or too loud a tone, to drop the voice

toward the conclusion of the sentence, so that the last words become inaudible. Another fault is to use a very high pitch and a loud tone in the beginning of the discourse, whereby the voice soon becomes hoarse and the latter part of the sermon inaudible. Or if the preacher adopt a pitch or tone beyond the power of his voice, his speaking becomes painful to himself and to his hearers. Even a weak voice may attain satisfactory results with the aid of a clear and *distinct pronunciation*. Every syllable ought to be pronounced sharply and distinctly, so as to be carried to the ear separately from every preceding and following syllable. All swallowing of words and syllables, all lisping and stammering, speaking through the nose, through the teeth, etc., offend against this essential quality.

Correct Accentuation may be considered a part of distinctness. Especially in English, a word frequently becomes unintelligible when incorrectly accentuated. Proper accentuation relates not only to the individual word, but to sentences and the various parts of the discourse. It is necessary to accentuate that word of a sentence which requires emphasis, and to pronounce each part of the sermon in the proper tone.

The proper *tempo*, or degree of movement, likewise contributes very much to render the elocution clear and distinct. Too rapid a delivery, besides marring the intelligibleness, derogates from the dignity and impressiveness of a discourse. Too great slowness, as if one were counting the words, or dictating for writing, is the opposite extreme. When all words and sentences are spoken equally slowly, especially when this is done from phlegmatic indifference, it is very tedious and fatal to attention. The size of the church building, and frequently, too, the capacity of the audience, are important conditions in determining the proper degree of slowness.

Lastly, the position of the preacher is a point not to be overlooked. When a speaker is unacquainted with the acoustics of a building, he should first inform himself on this point. As a rule it is best, when standing in the pulpit, to speak in a diagonal direction. The speaker should stand in the middle of the pulpit, so that the sound may reverberate from the sounding-board and from a solid surface in the rear, a pillar or the wall. It is disadvantageous to speak in the direction of open doors or windows, in a straight line along the aisle of the church, or to throw the sound toward the ceiling.

The delivery will be *agreeable* when it is natural, animated, modulated, and euphonic. Naturalness requires that the voice and tone adopted should suit the individuality of the speaker as well as the nature of the subject. The speaker must be thoroughly imbued with his subject, and then reproduce his own convictions in a free and unaffected manner. He ought to guard against adopting a foreign tone, or endeavoring to imitate the peculiarities of another, for in such a case his delivery would necessarily become affected and unnatural. The most efficacious means of avoiding all affectation on the one hand and all embarrassment on the other is the ascetical preparation—the consideration of the dignity, importance, and responsibility of his position, the greatness and sublimity of the truths that he preaches, the sublime aim of gaining souls for Christ. This will easily enable him to forget self and seek naught but Christ.

The delivery must furthermore be moderately animated. A languid, drawling, monotonous delivery necessarily produces a listless disposition in the hearer, whilst a moderately animated delivery is an excellent means of rousing and sustaining attention and interest.

Such animation will also insure the proper diversity and variety to the delivery. This variety is effected by appropriate changes in the modulation and force of the voice, as well as in the tempo of the discourse. It must be dictated by the nature of the subject and the sentiment of the speaker. At times the tone will therefore be that of narration, at others, that of demonstration or exhortation; at one time elevated, at another solemn; sometimes serious, animated; sometimes, again, calm and dignified. With all this variation there must be a certain basic tone, that will run through the whole discourse, and be characteristic of it, one fundamental or dominant tone being better suited for a pathetic, another for a familiar discourse, etc.

Faults against this variety are: (*a*) isotony: when the speaker rises and falls ever in the same scale; or (*b*) monotony: when he uses the same tone for instruction, exhortation; or (*c*) a disregard of the necessary pauses; or, again, (*d*) the other extreme of introducing too frequent and long pauses; finally, (*e*) when his fall of voice at the conclusion of a sentence is always by a semitone, or still worse, when his voice rises at the last syllable, or when he speaks in a whining, singing, declamatory tone, thus affecting an unnatural modulation of voice.

Euphony forbids all unpleasant and discordant sounds, hoarseness or harshness of voice, stammering, halting, nasal twang, etc., and requires an agreeable temper of the voice, easy and natural transition from one tone to another.

To be *forcible and impressive*, the delivery should be solemn, dignified, animated, and spirited. The preacher who is impressed with his sublime vocation will find it easy to speak with love and holy enthusiasm as a father would to his children, and thus produce the required effects. Of all the faults of delivery, the most

disastrous is lack of warmth and cordiality, and nothing is more repulsive than an affected pathos and meaningless declamatory sound.

ART. III.

ACTION.

67. Action in oratory signifies the adaptation of the speaker's attitude, gestures, and countenance to the subject, as well as to his thoughts and emotions.

Although action is subordinate to elocution, it is nevertheless of great importance in speaking. The state of the mind naturally seeks expression and, as it were, embodiment in the countenance and gesture, and is thus communicated to others often without even the aid of words, but always in a more impressive and emphatic manner than by words alone. As the oral delivery engages the ear, so action engages the eye of the hearer.

Action may be natural, inasmuch as it of itself expresses the thought or emotion, *e. g.*, weeping, bowing of the head, fierce or friendly mien, or it may be conventional and symbolic, as genuflecting, folding of hands, striking the breast, etc. Again, it may be indicative,—pointing out, for instance, place, direction, extent, etc., or imitative,—expressing the form, condition, or action of persons or things.

All action in the pulpit should correspond to the nature of the sacred subject and to the oral delivery, and therefore be:

a) *Free and natural*, expressive of the thought and emotion, and suited to the individuality of the speaker. It should accompany and not precede or follow the word; should cease or change gradually, not suddenly and irregularly;

b) It should be *dignified*, whence such habits as constantly striking the pulpit with the hands or knocking against it with the breast, bobbing up and down in the pulpit, stamping with the feet, etc., are altogether objectionable;

c) Again, it should be *easy and graceful*, not awkward, stiff, angular, or halting; *simple*, not employed constantly, but only in the more important passages; *animated* and *varied*, according to the nature of the subject; finally,

d) It should be free from all levity, vanity, and passion.

68. In Particular, the Position of the Body should be easy, graceful, firm, without being rigid. The preacher should stand in the centre of the pulpit so that his hands rest easily on its crown. He should support himself on either foot, fixing it firmly, with leg and thigh well braced and the knee well strung, the corresponding limbs on the other side gracefully relaxed. The head should be held erect and natural.

The Countenance should be the mirror of the speaker's words and emotions. Its expression should be serious, mild, cheerful, according as the subject dictates. No rhetorical rules can regulate the countenance. It is governed solely by the deep and genuine feeling of a heart penetrated with the truth it speaks. The use of the eyes is of special importance. The speaker should early accustom himself to use them with ease and freedom, keeping them turned sympathetically to those he addresses, appealing to and commanding the audience. It is a serious fault to close or nearly close the eyes, to open them wide, to stare fixedly in one direction, or to let them roam about unsteadily and vaguely over the audience.

The Action of the Arms and Hands is the action that is most frequent and necessary. There are three re-

gions within which arms and hands move, according to the nature of the subject. The lower region extends from the ledge of the pulpit to the breast, and is the region of action suitable when pointing out inferior subjects, or in passages expressive of repudiation, detestation, abhorrence of anything mean and contemptible, likewise in the calm beginning of the discourse. The middle region—about the breast—is used in explanation, narrative, demonstration, and exhortation. In strong emotions, especially when they are of a good and joyful character, the arms and hands move in the upper region, from the breast to the head. The arms should not be extended above the head, nor be left to hang below the rail of the pulpit. They should not be pressed against the sides, nor extended rigidly, but gently curved inward at the elbow. Finally, the arms must never be held elevated during the silence of the speaker. Generally the right hand alone is moved, sometimes (especially in pointing out opposites) also the left. When the one arm is elevated, the other rests on the pulpit, or when speaking from the altar, the other may rest a little below the breast; at the conclusion of the sermon they are joined or folded.

The Hand should be extended. The palm of the hand will be turned upward or downward as the sentiment may demand. The open palm is upturned, and the arm slightly extended toward the audience, as if the speaker wished to present the sacred truths to them, in instruction, interrogation, request. It is turned downward and the hand rises and sinks in slight undulatory movements in assertion, argumentation. In the same position, but further down, and as if repelling, the hand expresses denial, negation, censure, detestation. The hand held edgewise before the speaker in a raised position is expressive of doubt or uncertainty.

In solemn asseveration the hand is placed upon the breast. In prayer both hands are folded on the breast, sometimes one hand may be turned, together with the eyes, toward the altar, whilst the other hand rests upon the breast. Both hands folded upon the breast and bent downward, with fingers knit together, whilst the eyes are either cast down or raised upward, express pain; the hands extended and raised toward heaven are expressive of joy, gratitude, and jubilation. In all action the curved is the æsthetic line.

Both extremes of action—too little and too much gesture, negligence, as well as excess—offend against propriety.

69. Additional.—Means of sustaining the interest of the audience and of impressing the matter of the discourse upon their memory.

Attention and docility on the part of the audience are an indispensable condition for attaining the ends of instruction. The hearer must follow the teacher as a guide, and by the reaction of his own mind and heart appropriate the thoughts and feelings of the speaker. It is not sufficient, however, to receive the divine truth; this truth must be retained and therefore permanently impressed upon the mind. "They who in a good and very good heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience."

Religious truths must penetrate the soul of man, become the principle and rule of his interior and exterior acts, and constantly exert their hallowing influence over mind and heart. Besides, every religious discourse presupposes the knowledge of many other doctrines and terms, which must therefore have been appropriated by the mind. All religious teaching must therefore be of such a character that it may be easily remembered.

The general means for rendering a discourse intelligible, interesting, and memorable have already been indicated in the preceding chapters. The more perfect a discourse is in matter and form, the livelier, deeper, and more permanent will be the impression it makes upon the mind of the hearer.

Special means for this purpose are the selection of a subject and its development in a manner that is new, interesting, varied, and copious, without being tiresome and oppressive. Secondly, a clear and impressive manner of presenting the matter, order and clearness in division, examples, illustrations, etc.; a style and delivery animated, varied, full of imagery, affection, always addressing itself directly to the hearer, so that each one may suppose that he alone is being addressed. Thirdly, the external hindrances to attention should be removed as far as possible, as weariness, heat, cold, distraction, too great length, especially in the case of children, uneducated persons, etc.

The Memory is greatly assisted by the *unity and simplicity* of the subject. The sentence should ever be brief, clear, and full of meaning. It is advisable to use familiar objects as a starting-point, such as the practices of public and private worship; the recurrence of these practices will recall to mind the subject explained in connection with them. Finally, the leading proposition and the main division should be frequently repeated in the same brief and clear words, without, however, monotonous uniformity.

CHAPTER VII.

DIVISION OF SERMONS ACCORDING TO THEIR SUBJECT-MATTER.

ART I.

DOGMATICAL SERMONS.

70. Nature, Aim, and Necessity of Dogmatical Sermons.—Dogmatical sermons have for their subject a truth or fact of faith. Their aim is to give the faithful a thorough and practical instruction in religion, to help them appreciate the glories and advantages of their faith, to render them secure against the temptations that surround it, and to lead them to practise this faith, or to reduce it from a merely speculative to an operative faith. Dogmatical sermons are absolutely necessary, especially in our own time. Faith is the basis of a virtuous life, and morality without faith would be as a building without foundation, or as a body without a soul. In all arts and sciences the fundamental principles are taught first, and then only their application; why should the highest of sciences—the science of the saints—and the greatest of all arts—the art of the practice of virtue—form an exception? Especially nowadays it is unavoidable that without continued religious instruction man falls into indifference and infidelity.

Local circumstances may render the explanation of some religious truths more necessary than that of others. In general, those truths which are necessary for salvation, either as a means or by precept, must frequently be

explained. Hence the existence and the nature of God, His providence, the reward of virtue and the punishment of sin, the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, the Incarnation, the immortality of the soul, the necessity of grace, should directly or indirectly be frequent subjects of sacred oratory. Another class of subjects which need frequent consideration are those which are apt to lose their hold on the minds of the faithful because of their contact with the world; as, for instance, the divinity of the Catholic Church sole and alone among all religious bodies, the difference between natural and supernatural virtue and the necessity of the latter, besides all truths which are assailed more than others in particular times and places. Thirdly, those which have a more direct influence on daily life, as sin, grace, sacraments, holy Mass. Finally, those which have been specially enjoined by the laws of the Church, *e. g.*, the ceremonies of the Mass, and the sacrament of Matrimony, enjoined by the Council of Trent.

71. Three Kinds of Dogmatical Sermons.—The doctrines of faith admit of a threefold treatment: theoretical, practical, and apologetical. The particular end of the theoretical sermon is to explain and confirm the dogma. The preacher must in such discourses be careful to give the explanation always strictly accordingly to Catholic teaching, and to formulate it in clear, precise, and plain terms. In demonstrating the truth of the dogma he must guard against the danger of weakening instead of strengthening the faith of his hearers. This might easily happen with the most familiar Christian doctrines; such as the existence of God, the divinity of Christ, the immortality of the soul, the real presence, the existence of hell, etc. Many a simple, pious soul, that never suspected the possibility of a doubt among Catholics concerning these doctrines, might easily conceive doubts or

at least take offence at a direct proof of these truths. The preacher therefore ought never to make it appear that he suspects any of his audience of doubting these truths; he will present his thesis, as well as the proof for the same, not in a directly dogmatical formula, but in an indirect manner. For example, he will not say: "I shall now prove the existence of God," but rather: "Let us, my dear brethren, consider how all things are conducive to the knowledge of God and of His infinite perfections." Instead of proving directly the truth of the real presence, he will dwell on the sublimity, consolation, and advantage of this truth. In this manner the reasons for the truth of the dogma are really presented, doubts that may exist in the minds of some are solved, and the faithful are not exposed to the danger of being led to doubt by the very proofs advanced for the truth.

Nor must the dogmatic sermon ever degenerate into a dry, abstract doctrinal discourse. The dogmas of faith must not only be explained and proven, but their relation and influence upon the life of the faithful should also be pointed out. This is the practical method of treating the dogma. It is supposed in such a discourse that the doctrine is well understood and firmly believed. The peculiar object now is to show its practical efficacy, viz., that it not only perfects and orders the knowledge of man, assists poor human reason, guides and directs it on the dark and dangerous path of life, but that it also protects and supports the troubled and tempted in life and death, comforts the afflicted, preserves us from discouragement and despair, raises the fallen, establishes the true happiness, peace, and joy of individual persons and families, of countries and peoples, etc. Thus presented, the truth will appear to the hearer as an inestimable treasure, which he will eagerly em-

brace and gratefully and lovingly cherish. Whilst the theoretical sermon appeals more to the mind, the practical dogmatical sermon addresses itself more to the will and the affections. Both methods will generally be united, though the one or the other may predominate. First, the doctrine ought to be clearly defined, thoroughly demonstrated, and, if necessary, the objections satisfactorily answered; then it ought to be represented in all its beauty, sublimity, its consoling and elevating nature, so that the mind, will, and affections be gained over to the truth.

At times the preacher may find occasion to defend the Catholic doctrine against the assaults of its enemies. For this end he may employ the apologetic or polemic method. The apologetic (indirect) method is generally preferable. It explains clearly and intelligibly what Catholic truth is, demonstrates it, and develops it in its beauty and efficacy. The errors are not expressly mentioned, or they are stated as objections introduced with mild and compassionate, never with violent or contemptuous, epithets, and are effectually refuted. Even when the audience is of a mixed character, consisting of Catholics and non-Catholics, it is always best to use this indirect method. "Heretics or infidels," says St. Francis de Sales, "when they perceive that we attack them, naturally put themselves on their guard against us. They immediately distrust the discourse, in which he who proposes the difficulty also proposes the answer, in which the preacher says what he wishes without any one having the power to reply or to contradict him."

The polemic method therefore is generally not advisable. It consists in directly attacking and refuting all opposition to Catholic doctrine. A direct attack upon heresy easily appears as a direct attack upon heretics,

and is calculated rather to excite and embitter than to conciliate them and gain them over. As a rule, then, the direct or polemic method is not to be used in the treatment of dogma. But when any pernicious error arises in the congregation, when the seeds of infidelity or heresy are sown among the faithful, publicly or secretly, by word or script, then the pastor is obliged to use this method, to openly and directly oppose falsehood and impiety, expose their real nature, and paralyze their efficiency by the power of Catholic truth. The preacher is indeed a messenger of peace, but for that very reason obliged to protect his flock from the attack of ravenous wolves. But even in such cases the error or false practice must never be exaggerated; it must be stated correctly, represented in its opposition to Catholic doctrine and its harmful effects upon religious-moral life. The main object is to confirm the truth; the polemic method is of secondary importance. The language of the preacher, especially in such discourses, must be clear, firm, and confident; the answer to the objection must be full and exhaustive; he must avoid the slightest indication of indecision and embarrassment, lest the objection might seem stronger than the answer.

ART. II.

MORAL SERMONS.

72. Nature and Various Kinds of Moral Sermons.—Moral sermons have for their main subject a truth of Christian morality, inculcating the force of an obligation, or the practice of a virtue, the abandoning of a vice, and the detestation of sin. The preaching of such moral truths must always possess a positive Christian character, and have for its basis Christian principles and dogmas.

The preacher may show the harmony that exists between the moral teachings of the Gospel and the laws of reason, but he must do this in such a manner that the Gospel with its divine authority always appears as the primary source of the obligation; otherwise his preaching will amount to nothing more than mere rationalistic moralizing.

He may treat the truths of Christian morality in a threefold manner, viz., theoretical, practical, or ascetical. In the theoretical sermon the general Christian truths of morality form the thesis, which is clearly explained, then confirmed by showing its intrinsic connection with the dogma, and by proofs from Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason. It is then by suitable amplification and by developing the proper motives impressed upon the minds of the hearers, and the contrary false principles of the world are refuted and the faithful warned against them. The special aim of the practical method is to point out the precepts of morality, and to apply them to the life and circumstances of the faithful. St. Charles Borromeo here cautions the preacher (*Past. Instr.*) not to be content with general and indefinite representations, but to descend to the various species and even acts of virtue and vice, and to explain them singly and individually. "In this manner," he continues, "the faithful will perceive much more clearly the nature of the individual sin or species of sin, and be led to abhor it, as well as the offices and acts of the individual virtue, which they will thus more easily be induced to practise." In general it is advisable to combine the two methods, the theoretical and the practical. Finally, the preacher should by no means neglect the ascetical treatment of moral subjects. This consists principally in pointing out the obstacles to the fulfilling of a duty, or to the practice of a virtue, the dangers to which particular vir-

tues and particular conditions and positions of life are exposed, as well as the means, motives, and manner of practising a virtue or abandoning a vice, etc. By the theoretico-practical method the preacher shows the necessity, by the ascetical method the possibility, of virtue; the former method emphasizes the obligation, the latter the means—the grace of God, and the means of obtaining this grace—which render the accomplishment possible and easy.

The moral sermon, as a rule, requires a clear division, great care in the painting of morals, which must ever be true, and though vivid and impressive, never exaggerated; finally, it calls for abundant illustration by examples, comparisons, etc. As in the dogmatic sermon the preacher must exercise great caution in introducing objections, so he must be very careful in the moral sermon never to occasion harmful or dangerous mental representations in his hearers. This caution is particularly necessary in speaking on the duties of the various stations of life, on the sixth commandment, occasions of sin, scandal, and the like.

73. Special Kinds of Moral Sermons are penitential sermons, sermons of reproof, consolatory addresses. The first of these endeavor to terrify and convert the sinner. They must be distinguished by thoroughness, force, and unction, yet also by great prudence and loving consideration. If these last qualities were wanting, they would tend rather to embitter and harden the sinner. No hard or harsh words should enter into penitential discourses. The greater the sinner, the more kindness is necessary. On the other hand, it often requires only a kind word to convert the most hardened heart. Father Faber says that kindness has converted more men than zeal and eloquence together. Sermons of censure and reproof, which may become necessary on account of some

great public scandal, must likewise ever be couched in measured language, free from all exaggeration, partiality, and especially from all personal bitterness. It must be evident from the words and the whole manner of the preacher that he wishes to correct the abuse only, not to make it an occasion for offending and wounding the transgressor. He should never censure the faults or vices of one class in the absence of that class and the presence of other classes of persons.

Consolatory sermons are held on occasions of public calamities, and aim to raise and comfort those stricken down by grief and suffering. In such cases it is necessary first to acknowledge the suffering of the persons concerned, and oftentimes to enter into a description of it; thereby the preacher will at once conquer the hearts of the distressed; then he must direct the minds of the sufferers to God, to His merciful providence, and to the eternal supernatural good; such considerations instil peace and calm into the harrowed mind. Finally, he must exhort them to patience and resignation, and encourage them to renewed effort and endeavor, so that with God's help the loss of the past will be repaired in the future.

ART. III.

HISTORICAL AND LITURGICAL SERMONS.

74. Historical Sermons are those which are based upon the narrative of persons and events in sacred history—the Bible, history of the Church, propagation of the faith in various countries, provinces, or congregations—and upon the lives of the saints. The object of these sermons is to represent the truths of Christian faith and morality in a more vivid and impressive manner. The preacher may either first narrate the life of the person

or the event in its entirety, and then make the application, or he may divide the narrative into different parts and connect the application with each one individually, or again, he may begin by expounding a truth, and exemplify it by the subsequent narrative. These sermons must especially be distinguished by evident unity of object.

75. The Subject of the Liturgical Sermon is the divine worship of the Church, and its purpose is to enable and lead the people to take part in this divine service in an intelligent, appreciative, and fruitful manner. This class of sermons is, alas! very sadly neglected, though it must be accounted among the most necessary and salutary kinds of discourses. The Council of Trent,¹ the Roman Catechism,² the Ritual,³ and many provincial councils speak of the sacred obligation of the preacher to deliver frequently sermons of this nature. The liturgy is the life of the Church, and must therefore constitute likewise the life of her children. Without liturgical sermons the participation of the people in the functions of divine service will necessarily soon become unintelligent, merely mechanical and formal, lukewarm and negligent. The preaching of these sermons forms in truth one of the highest offices of the pastor. He should not be content with explaining individual ecclesiastical functions, but should preach series of sermons embracing the entire liturgy.

¹ Sess. xxii., ch. 8. ² P. 2, ch. ii., no. 59. ³ Tit. i., no. 10.

CHAPTER VIII.

DIVISION OF SERMONS ACCORDING TO FORM.

ART. I.

SERMONS IN RHETORICAL FORM.

76. The "Set Sermon." The Familiar Discourse.—The principal forms of the sermon in vogue at present are the rhetorical and the homiletical form. The first comprises the so-called "set sermon" and familiar exhortations; the second, homiletical and catechetical discourses. In the first class the preacher selects at will his subject as well as the manner of developing it; in the latter he binds himself more or less to the biblical reading, in question, or to the form of the catechism.

The first of these, the "set sermon," is a public discourse composed in conformity with the fixed rules of oratory. It requires intrinsic connection and unity of its parts, and a finished form of composition and delivery. It embraces a text, an exordium, and an argumentative part, and, in addition to the appeals to the passions scattered through the sermon, a formal peroration. The set sermon ought to be employed at least occasionally. Such occasions are especially the great festivals of the year. At such times the preacher should vary the familiar method which he usually employs, and interrupt his series of instructive discourses to gratify as well as benefit his flock by an elaborate and finished discourse.

The festive mood of the faithful on those days leads them to expect a sermon that will correspond to their sentiments, and they would be much disappointed by an ordinary, familiar, every-day discourse in the pulpit. The Second Council of Baltimore advises the preacher to occupy his leisure time, amongst other things, with the composition of such sermons.

The Familiar Exhortation is a brief discourse which explains and inculcates individual truths or duties, and admonishes, exhorts, etc., according to circumstances and occasion. The most frequent occasions of such discourses are the dispensation of the sacraments—Confirmation, general Communion, Matrimony, also processions, blessings of altars, statues, bells, etc. Their form is simple, and the main point is to unify the whole discourse. With these sermons we may class the so-called “five-minutes’ sermons,” which the Third Plenary Council commands to be held in all Low Masses or High Masses on Sunday, outside of the last or Parochial Mass. “In order that these short sermons may be of the greatest possible utility, we advise pastors to take their subjects not only from the biblical reading, but to explain the Catholic doctrine consecutively, according to the Roman or any other approved catechism.” Even in these brief discourses we may distinguish a short introduction, the proposition (mention of the subject), explanation, application, and a concluding exhortation, request, etc.

ART. II.

SERMONS IN HOMILETICAL FORM.

77. Nature and Various Kinds of Homilies.—The homily is an edifying explanation and application of a portion of Holy Writ. The advantages of the homily are: a)

That it enables the preacher to present in the course of a year the whole range of revelation, and to appear in his true character, viz., that of a herald of the divine word. *b*) The homily is the original form of sacred oratory, as is evident from the history of the primitive Church. *c*) It trains the people in the proper manner of reading Holy Scripture, and especially the selections from the Gospel, and since many Catholic families possess at home a "*Goffine*," or other explanation of these Gospels, the homily in the church receives most valuable assistance from this private reading. On the other hand, the homily has certain disadvantages, in that it often presents a greater amount of matter than the faithful can well digest and retain. For the same reason it cannot treat each point thoroughly and exhaustively, and finally it is obliged to make repetitions, as the same truths re-occur in different readings.

The homily ought to be employed at least on frequent occasions on account of its various advantages. Its prominent features should be thoroughness, clearness, completeness, and practical value. It must be thorough, since it is to introduce the hearer to the true sense and spirit of Holy Writ. It must therefore also show the connection of the different parts of the reading and of a text with the preceding one. It must be clear, and for this end the preacher must make an apt selection of the subject-matter, and employ familiar terms. All examples and illustrations must likewise be taken from objects that are familiar to the hearers, and proposed in a language calculated to impress the mind and heart. Completeness requires that no point of importance be passed over. Finally, it will be rendered practical by appropriate applications to Christian life, by indicating ways and means of exercising the truth proposed, and by furnishing effectual motives for such practice.

The homily itself may be distinguished into the simpler and higher homily. The homily in the simple form explains the biblical reading verse by verse, not binding itself to any strictly logical division, but following the order of the sentences and texts. It embraces, as a rule, four parts: introduction, explanation, application, conclusion.

The introduction is taken either from the connection of the Bible-reading with the preceding part of the Gospel, or from the occasion and circumstances of the occurrence or discourse. After this the leading plan of the Gospel and of the explanation is indicated. The explanation may take up one text after another, or it may select the most important points, and treat them successively as so many parts of the homily. This is done with advantage especially in narratives, parables, etc. The explanation ought to be characterized by biblical correctness, a simple and popular style, and may give only the literal or also the mystical sense, as so many of the holy fathers have done. The application consists in one or more practical deductions made from the text explained. It may follow each text or, if the homily is divided into several parts, at the end of each part. In conclusion the homilist earnestly and warmly exhorts the congregation to live up to the Gospel explained, or when several applications have been made, he briefly summarizes them, and ends with a few impressive, encouraging, and earnest words.

Sketch of a Simple Homily. (Gospel for the 13th Sunday after Pentecost.—Luke xvii. 11-19.)

Introduction:—This Gospel is very consoling and instructive: consoling, since it points out to us an easy and certain remedy for the greatest of all evils; instructive, in telling us what God requires of us in return for signal and extraordinary favors.

Explanation and application:—"When Jesus entered into a certain town, there met Him ten lepers, who stood afar off." These

lepers are the image of the sinner. They were, by the law of Moses, cut off from the society of other men, lest they might spread the disease by contagion. In like manner the sinner, as long as he remains in the state of sin, is cut off, though not from the body of the Church, yet from her inner life. O unhappy sinner! Unless he be converted, he will be eternally separated from God and His elect! "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" They remain standing afar off, but they raise their voice and cry out. Behold the image of the sinner who recognizes his deplorable condition and looks upon Jesus as his Master and Saviour. "Whom when He saw..." The greatness of God's mercy—what confidence ought it to inspire!—"Go show yourselves to the priests." Even now Christ says the same to the sinner. The priests of the Old Law could only declare the lepers healed, but could not heal them. The lepers at once availed themselves of the means indicated by Christ, and their obedience met with reward: "It came to pass, as they went, they were made clean." How far superior is the power of the priests of the New Law! Go, acknowledge thy leprosy to them as Christ commands, and thou wilt be healed.

"And one of them, when he saw that he was made clean, went back, with a loud voice glorifying God." How touching is the gratitude of this one leper! "With a loud voice:" he was not content with a mere interior gratitude;... "he praised God,"—the Christian attributes all things to God. But "were not ten made clean? and where are the nine?" A grateful heart is in truth a rare thing. Of the ten lepers only one is grateful, "and this one a stranger." This remark deserves attention, for it has not been added without a purpose. The very children of the kingdom are most forgetful of their indebtedness to God—they whom the Lord had so overwhelmed with grace, that it might be said of them: "Their storehouses are full, flowing out of this into that" (Ps. cxliii. 13), who might well exclaim: "What shall I render to the Lord...?" Our Lord Himself makes this complaint; so that it is evident that He expects and demands gratitude: but He is also ready to reward it with new graces. "Arise, go thy way," He says to the leper, "for thy faith hath made thee whole." In like manner He will say to thee: "Arise." He raises thee from thy fall and degradation. "Go thy way;" He gives thee strength to walk in the way of His commandments. "Thy faith;..." He assures you of the fruits of salvation in this life and in eternity. If you would merit the graces and bounties of God in abun-

dant measure, and securely retain them, imitate the example of the Samaritan. Turn to thy Saviour who has cleansed thee from the leprosy of sin, and return no more to the world. "When he saw that he was made clean, he went back;..." praise Christ by word and work. "With a loud voice glorifying God;" remain united to Christ by humility and prayer. "He fell on his face before His feet, giving thanks;" the healed leper did not arise until Our Lord told him: "Arise and go thy way;" so do thou arise and go from His presence only to do His bidding.

Conclusion :—Follow, then, the example of this grateful leper in confidently seeking help of Jesus. The gift that he received we also have received in a far higher sense; show your gratitude for this and other gifts, which you constantly receive from Him, by producing constant fruits of salvation.

The higher homily likewise explains and applies the Gospel with a view to edification, but in the form of a sermon. The subject-matter of the Gospel reading is viewed as a whole, in the intrinsic connection of its various parts, and formulated into one sentence, which becomes the proposition of the sermon. It will be seen that only those Gospel readings which treat of a single subject admit of the higher homily, such as all the Gospels which contain the history of the sacred mysteries: the Annunciation, Birth of Our Lord, Circumcision, Easter, Ascension, etc., in short, all the biblical narratives, parables, and similes.

This form of the homily is similar to the sermon. The introduction reviews the circumstances of the Gospel narrative, and defines the point from which the homilist is to consider his subject. In an easy and natural way it leads over to the subject itself, and gives the division. In the body of the homiletic discourse particular attention must be paid to the introductions and subdivisions of the various parts, and the transitions from one to another, so that the unity of the subject and the intrinsic connection of the various parts be always kept in view.

Sketch of a Higher Homily on the same Gospel. (Luke xvii. 11-19.)

Text:—"As He entered into a certain town, there met Him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off and lifted up their voice, saying: Jesus, master, have mercy on us." *Introduction*:—How happy were they who were enabled to behold the Saviour of mankind in the flesh, who, when smitten with bodily affliction, could appeal to Him and rest assured of being healed! "Oh, that we had lived in those blessed times!" Such is the sigh of many a present invalid. Have courage, my dear Christian; the Saviour is even now as full of compassion as then; and though He may not heal the sick as immediately and visibly, He yet blesses the efforts of the physician and the medicines. But was the healing of bodily disease the chief end of the Incarnation of the Son of God? You know, dear brethren, that He came from heaven to heal spiritual disease,—the leprosy of the soul,—and this work He continues every day and every moment for all those who approach Him in penance. As the ten lepers are an image of the sinner, so (*Proposition*) their conduct shows the characteristics of a true penance. For (I.) in their desire to be cleansed the ten lepers show us the marks of *incipient* penance, and (II.) in returning to Our Saviour after his cure the one leper indicates the character of a *persevering* penance. *I. Part*:—The ten lepers stood afar off. The sinner who would come to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament dares not approach, conscious of his unworthiness. Acknowledgment on the part of the sinner of his sinful state.—First degree of penance. The lepers raised their voice and cried out. They raise their voice and cry out because they wish to be cleansed. They appeal to Jesus because they know and acknowledge that He alone can help them. Likewise the sinner.—Second degree of penance. They say: Have mercy on us; they have recourse to His mercy, and profess that if He helps them the cure will be attributable altogether to His mercy. So does the sinner.—Third degree of penance. The lepers go at the bidding of Jesus to show themselves to the priests. They employed the means prescribed for their healing, although they could not comprehend why they should show themselves to the priests, who had power only to declare them healed, but not to heal them. In like manner the sinner goes to the priests of the New Law, exhibits to them the leprosy of his soul, that they may heal him in the name of Christ, who said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."—Fourth degree of incip-

ient penance. *II. Part*:—The healed leper fell on his face before the feet of Jesus, to express his reverence and adoration. Thus the sinner also returns from the tribunal of penance and falls upon his knees in grateful adoration of the clemency of his Saviour.—First degree of persevering penance. The healed leper praised God and thanked Him. So does the sinner after his absolution. He would invite heaven and earth, and all living, aye, inanimate beings, to praise the eternal mercy of God.—Second degree of persevering penance. But the one leper is not content to praise God with his voice; he returns to the Lord. The true penitent does not return to those places or to those persons who were the occasions of his sin—he returns to his Saviour by the observance of His commandments.—Third degree of persevering penance. The leper rises not from the feet of Jesus until he is told: “Arise and go thy way.” The penitent, who has returned to his Saviour, humbly remains with Christ, knowing full well that Our Lord gives grace to the humble to walk in the way of His law.—The highest degree of persevering penance. The *conclusion* is an exhortation not to be satisfied with an incipient penance only, but to cherish the spirit of penance and to persevere in it unto the end.

78. Catechetical Sermons have for their subject the teachings of religious belief, as formulated in the catechism. Their aim is to impart a thorough, complete, practical, and operative knowledge of religious truths in their connection. Besides their form, they differ from the homily in this, that the latter is complete in itself, and has no connection with the preceding, whilst the former constitute a methodical and strictly connected series of discourses. They are of the greatest possible practical utility, and for those that have received none, or at most an imperfect religious instruction in their youth, which they may have now forgotten, these catechetical sermons are an absolute necessity. They are therefore recommended and enjoined by many positive decrees of councils of various countries. Every one acquainted with the condition of affairs in our own country, the imperfect relig-

ious training acquired in youth, especially by pupils of the public schools, the large number of converts in our midst, must at once admit the special advisability of such sermons for our people.

The introduction of a series of such sermons will dwell especially on the utility and necessity of this class of religious discourses, whilst the particular sermon is best introduced by a reference to that which has gone before, or a brief summary of the previous discourse and the announcement of the present subject. In the course of the catechetical sermon the particular truth or precept is developed according to the rules already laid down in preceding chapters. The explanation must be varied as far as possible by illustration, by example, comparison, demonstration, refutation, the supplying of motives, etc. The whole sermon must be distinguished by clearness, precision, and animation, as a dry, pedantic manner is fatal to its interest and success. In the conclusion the main points of the discourse are recapitulated, the practical application supplied, unless that has already been done in the body of the sermon, and the peroration is an earnest exhortation to carry out in practice the instruction given.

CHAPTER IX.

DIVISION ACCORDING TO OCCASION.

ART. I.

SERMONS ON ORDINARY OCCASIONS.

79. The Sunday and Holy-day Sermons.—According to the time and occasion of their delivery, sermons may be divided into two classes: the regular sermon, on Sundays and holy-days, and the extraordinary or occasional sermon, delivered on unusual and extraordinary occasions.

The Sunday sermon takes its subject, as a rule, from the Gospel or Epistle of the day; it develops, divides, analyzes, in a word, treats this subject according to the laws laid down previously, and requires no special discussion here.

The holy-day sermon is that delivered on the feasts of Our Lord, the feasts of the Blessed Virgin, or those of the saints. The sermons on the feast-days of Our Lord have for their subject the principal mysteries of redemption. The intention of the Church, and the needs and expectations of the faithful demand that on the chief festivals of Our Lord these mysteries be treated in the pulpit. They are the foundation of Christian faith, the food of Christian piety, and the source of many and great blessings and graces to those of the faithful who celebrate them in the proper manner. The preacher should therefore consider it his

sacred duty to do all in his power to make the worthy and fruitful celebration of these festivals possible and easy to his flock.

He may treat these mysteries in a threefold manner: *historically*, by laying before his hearers the facts of the mystery as related in the gospel or by tradition; *dogmatically*, by pointing out the position and importance of the mystery in the work of redemption; *morally*, dwelling on those lessons of Christian morality which the mystery inculcates.

Concerning the history of these mysteries the preacher must teach the doctrine of the Church. The best available manual for this purpose is probably the Catechism of the Council of Trent. In elucidation of the mystery the holy fathers often use apt examples and illustrations, which the preacher may likewise employ, although he is not called to clear away the mystery. He must devote himself particularly to represent the perfections of God, of Our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, which are made manifest by the mystery, and the great advantages and graces that we derive from it. He will thus inspire the faithful with devotion, veneration, and love for their faith, with praise and adoration for the perfections of God, with gratitude for the graces received through the mystery, with joy at their own happiness, and with the desire to lead a life more virtuous and more replete with good works than before.

When the preacher wishes to dwell especially on the moral lessons to be drawn from the mystery, his instruction should always be suited to the particular mystery, and flow from it as a natural and easy deduction. Thus the mystery of the birth of Our Lord teaches us the duty of loving God, who was made an infant to demonstrate His love for us; calls upon us to practise the virtues which He exhibited in His infancy, viz., simplicity, in-

nocence, humility. The mystery of His passion and death teaches us patience, mortification. The Resurrection demands of us to rise from the death of sin to the life of grace, to rise to a desire and love for heavenly things, etc.

As regards the *form* of these sermons, it may be varied. It may be the form of a simple homily, explaining the mystery historically, following the narrative of the Gospel, inserting reflections, wherever convenient, and closing with an earnest and warm exhortation. Or the sermon may take the form of a meditation, contemplating in a devout and edifying manner the persons, actions, and circumstances of the mystery. After a brief sketch of the mystery the points of such prayerful consideration are mentioned.

The form of the regular sermon may also be employed, according to which one main view of the mystery will be taken up and developed. The dogmatic representation may then form the first part, the moral the second part, or the dogmatic and moral view may be united in one point, *e. g.*, the Infant Saviour is *a*) a benefactor whom we should love; *b*) a preceptor whom we should hear; *c*) a model which we should imitate.

The Festivals of Our Blessed Lady are welcome occasions for the pastor to dwell on the privileges of Mary's grace and glory, her dignity as Mother of God, her position and office in the work of Redemption, her position with regard to us as mediatrix between us and her divine Son, and the power of her intercession. He will demonstrate these prerogatives from the decisions of the Church, her public cult, the teachings of the saints, the unanimous opinion of theologians, and from certain and indisputable facts. He ought to endeavor to profit by all the opportunities which these feast-

days offer to spread and cultivate among the faithful a deep and heartfelt devotion and a childlike, firm confidence in her.

On the minor feasts of the Blessed Virgin, as also at May devotions, sodality and confraternity meetings, he may expatiate on the interior and exterior devotion to the Blessed Virgin, on the imitation of her virtues, and on the confidence with which we are to have recourse to her in all necessities.

The suggestions and directions given above for the feasts of Our Lord are applicable also to these feasts of our Blessed Lady.

80. Panegyrics are discourses in praise of the saints, intended at the same time to encourage the faithful to imitate their virtues and to entertain great confidence in their intercession. For this end the preacher must on the one hand develop the great and venerable character of the saint, and on the other point out in the life of the saint the motives³ and the true way of perfection. The grand and venerable character of the saints appears from a simple narration of what they did and suffered for God and for their fellow-men, as well as from the picture that may be drawn of their virtues, viz., their faith, humility, charity, love of sacrifice. Furthermore this character is evident from the sanction and blessing which God bestowed upon their labors, from the extraordinary gifts and graces with which He endowed them, the miracles He wrought through them before and after their death, from the testimony of contemporaneous writers, of other saints, of entire nations, etc. The further end of the panegyric, that of leading the hearers to imitate the saints, is best attained by describing the method and means by which they became saints, the constant war they waged against their own evil inclinations and against extrinsic

obstacles and enemies; the means they employed (flight of the occasion, prayer, mortification, reception of the sacraments, etc.), the assistance of God's grace, and their co-operation with this grace, etc. The prejudice so prevalent among the faithful that sanctity consists only in extraordinary things must be removed by showing that the essence of all sanctity is the state of sanctifying grace, and that the individual act receives its saintly character from the interior spirit and sentiment with which it is performed. The preacher must therefore always call the attention of the faithful to these interior dispositions and motives, and instruct the faithful to submit their own lives, whatever their condition or state may be, to the influence of this interior spirit and disposition.

As a rule, the most prominent virtue of the saint, which may be termed his characteristic virtue, should be the chief topic of the panegyric. The other virtues and actions of the saint may be brought into connection with this most conspicuous virtue. The panegyric will thus receive a character of individuality and unity, and its effect will be much more vivid, instructive, and attractive. In doing this, however, the preacher must guard against too much artificiality in introducing very strained connections and relations. Rather than fall into this fault, or if the characteristic virtues of the saint have been already treated, as in the case of patronal saints, let him represent the saint in his various stages and conditions of life. He may portray the main features of such a life, and intersperse apt, instructive, and wholesome reflections. Thus the faithful will be better informed concerning the life of the saint, and more edified. When the life of a saint is very little known, a general truth or virtue, proper to the character of his life as apostle, martyr, confessor, etc.,

may be treated and illustrated by various incidents in his life. Often, too, it will prove very beneficial to treat on the feasts of the saints such general subjects as the invocation and veneration of the saints, the necessity of imitating them, the veneration of relics, the communion of saints, the dignity of the Christian, the call to perfection, etc.

The subject-matter of the panegyric determines, at the same time, its form. This will either be *historical*, giving the biography of the saint and dividing it into various epochs, or it will be *didactic* or *moral*, considering a special dogmatical or moral truth suited to the character of the saint, or treating even several virtues from one common point of view. When several saints are the subject of the same panegyric, they may be considered together from one common point of view, or each may be the subject of one part of the sermon.

The panegyric is faulty when it is a mere narrative, or a mere moral sermon, or when it contains unwarranted legends, or extols one saint at the expense of another, or finally, when it amounts to nothing more than mere verbiage or pathetic declamatory rhetoric.

81. Lenten Sermons are spiritual discourses held during the Lenten season besides the Sunday sermons. Their object is to prepare the faithful, by considering and venerating the passion and death of Our Lord and by sentiments and works of penance, for a worthy and blessed celebration of Easter. Lent is a time when the ceremonies of the Church and the grace of God dispose the faithful very favorably to hear and receive great Christian truths and powerful exhortations, and especially to reflect devoutly on the saving truths of the cross of Christ. In selecting subjects for the Lenten sermons the pastor must, as always, consider the necessities of his people. With this restric-

tion he may choose the history of the Passion, or any other chapter from the Bible, *v. g.*, the Psalm *Miserere*, or any subject in accordance with the spirit of Lent, such as sin, its guilt and punishment; the necessity of a Redeemer, of divine grace, of penance, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving; the justice or mercy of God, etc., etc. Even these subjects, however, should be seasoned with some reflections on the passion of Our Lord, so peculiarly appropriate to the season and gratifying to the expectations of the people at this time. The Lenten sermons should be distinguished even more than other sermons by apostolic fervor and unction, by force and thoroughness. A series of connected sermons is preferable.

ART. II.

DISCOURSES ON EXTRAORDINARY OCCASIONS.

82. Nature, Aim, and Characteristics of such Discourses.—

Although the Church has in her laws defined ¹ the minimum of Catholic preaching, she has also pointed out the occasions ² when a sermon would be appropriate and useful, though not strictly commanded. The Catholic pastor ought not to be satisfied with the observance of the letter of the law, but consider always the needs, the advantages, and the just expectations of his flock, and ought to avail himself of opportune occasions to instruct, exhort, and edify them. Such occasions are extraordinary occurrences, or celebrations, the purpose and moral lesson of which the preacher will explain to his people, thus qualifying them for a profitable participation in the event.

The invariable rule, which flows from the nature of

¹ Conc. Trent, sess. v., 2, de Ref.; sess. xxiv., 4, 7, de Ref.; sess. xxii., c. 8.

² Rit. Rom., tit. i., cap. unic., n. 10.

these extraordinary discourses, is that they should have for their subject the peculiar occasion and its relation to religion and morals. The manner and form, no less than the matter, should correspond with the nature of such occasions, thus adopting a joyous and festive, or a sad and solemn tone, as the case demands. The sermon should always be practical, as the extraordinary nature of the occasion is well calculated to impress the moral lesson more forcibly and lastingly than the ordinary sermon. No other class of sermons requires so much caution and oratorical tact as do these extraordinary discourses. Frequently, as in sermons at the first Mass or the silver or golden jubilee of a priest, in valedictory sermons, funeral sermons, and the like, it will be necessary to introduce personal reference, but this should be equally remote from flattery and from abuse. Brevity will generally be an additional recommendation for these sermons.

These sermons may be distinguished into two classes: such as are occasioned by unusual occurrences, joyous or calamitous, which concern the whole or a large part of the community; and such as are prompted by extraordinary ecclesiastical celebrations. The first may be either of a joyous character, *v. g.*, occasions of thanksgiving for public benefits, anniversaries of auspicious events, deliverance from impending or present evils, etc., or of a mournful nature, as, for example, public calamities, great fires, floods, pestilence, war, deaths of great and good public men, etc. In the former the preacher will endeavor to excite the faithful to a sincere, lively, and practical gratitude to God, expressed by words and good works. He will dwell on the attributes of God, His goodness, mercy, and power as manifested by His bounties to men, and point out the intentions of God in bestowing these blessings.

On occasions of mourning the preacher will necessarily make it his first object to console his stricken flock. He will not forget, however, to represent these also as visitations of God, which have a distinct purpose in view. They remind us vividly of the power and justice of God, and exhort us to humility, resignation, penance, and prayer, and easily convince us of the transitory nature of all earthly things. The preacher will not rest content with general exhortations on both kinds of occasions, but will point out in detail the virtues which these occasions should prompt, and the best manner of profiting by them.

A special class of mournful occasions are those of deaths in the congregation. At the death of a prominent public ecclesiastic whose death also affects the congregation, *e. g.*, Pope, diocesan bishop, etc., it is fitting to pronounce an eulogy on his life and labors. At the same time it is an opportune occasion of dwelling on the certainty of death, necessity of preparation for death, etc. Where the custom of funeral sermons is in vogue and cannot well be abolished, the preacher should make the best of the occasion and always inculcate a wholesome truth, besides furnishing motives of consolation for the bereaved, and commending the soul departed to the prayers of the living. It may in some few extraordinary instances be advisable or permissible to speak of the person of the departed, but in such cases the preacher ought to use great discretion, lest he in any way disedify the faithful.

The general occasions of these extraordinary sermons, however, are the ecclesiastical celebrations, viz.:

a) The dispensation of the sacraments: of Baptism (on extraordinary occasions "when," for instance, as the Catechism of the Council of Trent remarks,¹ "the pastor

¹ P. 2, c. ii., q. 1, 2.

finds himself surrounded by a considerable number of the faithful," or at the baptism of adult converts); of Confirmation; of general Communion (as in the case of sodalities, societies, especially of the first Communion of children); and of Matrimony. The natural subject for these sermons will be the dignity, sanctity, necessity, utility of the sacrament, the explanation of the ceremonies, the disposition and duties of those receiving the sacrament, etc.

b) The dispensation of the sacramentals: blessings of persons and things, investing and profession of religious, blessing of churches, chapels, oratories, altars, statues, of Catholic school-buildings, convents, hospitals, asylums; or of buildings or objects devoted to profane purposes: bridges, railroads, telegraphs, ships, etc. The purpose and the meaning of the blessing or of the blessed objects, the duties of the persons who are themselves the subject of the blessing, or who are to make use of the things blessed, the special divine protection and assistance secured by the blessing, etc., will form easy and appropriate topics for the address on such occasions.

c) Finally, the sermons preached at the first holy Mass of a newly-ordained priest, or at the silver or golden jubilee of a priest, the installation or farewell sermon, are to be classed with these occasional sermons. Their main subject will be the priestly and pastoral office in its relations to the faithful. They ought to be characterized by modesty and absence of all exaggeration, and have in view the glory of God rather than the glorification of man, thus remaining faithful to the motto for all Catholic preaching: "We preach Christ crucified."

APPENDIX.

PREPARATION FOR PREACHING.

§3. Remote Preparation for Preaching.—The general preparation for the pulpit consists in acquiring those qualities necessary for a successful discharge of this office. All training and development of those faculties of mind and body which are employed in preaching may be considered a remote preparation for the pulpit. The material development of the mind is a part of this preparation, embracing, as it does, the acquiring of clear, sound, thorough, and copious knowledge, especially of religion, and likewise the training and ennobling of the will and the affections. The formal training of the mind habituates it to a correct, orderly, clear, and thorough method of thinking, and a correspondingly accurate and easy manner of expression in style and elocution.

This general preparation is indispensable for every preacher if he wishes to be qualified for efficient and edifying preaching. This general preparation is never finished. Even after long years in the exercise of the ministry the preacher must still continue in his endeavor to perfect himself in appropriate and useful knowledge, in holy sentiment, and in the practice of virtue, in ready and correct delivery, in accurate and adequate expression; for in proportion to this endeavor will be his success in the pulpit. Even if the individual ser-

mon be less well prepared, this defect will be supplied in great part by the general preparation.

The general means which have been pointed out in the introductory chapter for the success of pastoral ministry, viz., a diligent study of theology, especially of homiletics, as well as earnestness and assiduity in ascetical practices, especially of meditation and prayerful reading, serve also to qualify the priest more and more for the particular office of teaching. He will thereby acquire an ever truer, deeper, and more intimate understanding and knowledge of the word of God, and an ever more real, joyous, and practical zeal for the propagation of divine truth and the enforcement of divine law.

Special means for acquiring this preparation are the reading and study of Holy Scripture, of the fathers and doctors of the Church, of good sermons¹ and med-

¹ In studying a model sermon, it is well to read the sermon first cursorily only, and to notice its effect upon one's self, then to analyze it and consider it in parts, with the aid of such questions as these: What is the main subject of the sermon, and how is it divided and subdivided? What is the proximate aim and object of the sermon? Is it mainly instructive, or argumentative, or designed to move the will or the affections? By means of which amplifications, explanations, illustrations, proofs, motives, by what manner of appeal to the affections, etc., does it seek to attain this end? Is it successful, and by which means especially? Is its disposition and manner of developing the subject logically correct? Are all the various divisions and subdivisions organically united? Does it digress from the subject? Are the arguments true and irrefutable? What is the order of their succession? Which of these arguments are the most powerful and effectual? What deductions are drawn from the whole? Is the style good, the expression correct, appropriate, intelligible, dignified, etc.? Is the imagery apt and copious, or faulty and jejune? What figures of oratory are employed? Which thoughts or sentences are most pleasing, and why? Finally, what is the manner of the peroration? Is there a continual gradation up to the end? etc., etc.

itation-books, with reference to matter as well as form, meditation upon all religious subjects, practice in style and delivery, the habit of clear, correct, and unaffected speech and action, even in the ordinary affairs of life; observation of the natural expressions of joy, sadness, etc., in others; hearing and imitation of good sermons, counsel and criticism of one's own sermons by competent and well-meaning authorities; study of the practical results of the sermon among the faithful.

84. Proximate Preparation for Preaching.—Proximate preparation comprises the meditation, composition, and the memorizing of a particular sermon, practice of its delivery, and lastly, the proper disposition on the day of preaching.

Every preacher must make this preparation, and especially every young preacher, as well as every one that is less able or less practised in preaching. Otherwise it is impossible that the sermon be, as it ought to be, both in matter and form, well-planned and worked out, properly arranged, practised, and calculated to edify the faithful. Only a preacher possessing universal qualification and practice, eminent and thorough knowledge of his subject, great facility of expression and of oratorical development, may occasionally be excused from this elaborate preparation. But even with him such occasions must occur rarely, and only when he is to speak on subjects he has already handled and thoroughly mastered, for otherwise his preaching will certainly show poverty of thought and monotony, will be wanting in clearness and correctness, and full of commonplace, inaccuracies, and hasty expressions, and will necessarily weary and disedify the hearers, and even on those rare occasions when he may presume to dispense himself from an elaborate preparation, he ought never

venture to ascend the pulpit without some preparation, by meditating his subject and sketching the plan of his sermon.

The advantages of a diligent and perfect preparation with regard to the edification of the people are great and numerous. The greater perfection of the sermon in matter as well as in manner insures a proportionate success and permanent effect. Sermons delivered from memory are, *cæteris paribus*, incomparably superior to those read from manuscript, in being more vivid, forcible, and animated. Besides, the practice of the Church requires this form of sermon. With regard to the preacher, the elaborate preparation affords the advantages, first, of storing his mind with ideas and knowledge; then it practises and perfects him in the development and delivery of a sermon, and leaves him more free and unembarrassed; it develops his oratorical talent, so that in case of necessity he will be the better able to preach without such elaborate preparation; finally, it qualifies him the better for private instruction in the confessional, at the sick-bed, etc., for which he can make no such preparation.

Method and Means of Proximate Preparation.—The proximate preparation ought not to be deferred until the last day, but to begin early in the week, lest some unforeseen event might render it impossible.

The first important point is the selection of a subject that is in itself, and with reference to priest and people, appropriate. This subject may be predetermined, *v. g.*, by the extraordinary occasion or in serial sermons, or it may be left entirely or with some restrictions, such as that of the Sunday Gospel, to the choice of the preacher.

The Gospel may serve as a subject for the sermon, either entire or in part, or its individual ideas or sentences or even words or

expressions may be considered and selected as the main topic of the sermon. When the entire Gospel is the subject of the sermon, the essential idea of the whole Gospel reading is made the theme or proposition, and that verse which best expresses this idea is chosen for the text. For instance, in the Gospel on the Rogation days the text "Pray and you shall receive" contains the substance of the entire Gospel, namely, the necessity and advantages of prayer. When it is difficult or impossible to find such a verse, the various thoughts may be reduced to one leading proposition and that text be chosen which is closely connected with it. Thus in the Gospel of the first Sunday of Advent all the parts will be found to bear relation to the coming of Christ as Judge, and the text: "They shall see the Son of man coming," etc., will aptly introduce this subject. If the Gospel reading contains several distinct parts, each part may be considered separately and treated in the same way. The Gospel for the third Sunday of Lent may be divided into three parts, viz., the casting out of the dumb devil, the refutation of the calumnies against Our Lord, and the praise of the woman. Even the individual verses should be considered for the purpose of finding and determining the sermon-matter. Let the Gospel of the second Sunday after Epiphany serve as an example: "There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee." Subject: Matrimony as a sacrament; its sanctity, or the duties it imposes. V. 2: "Jesus also was invited, and His disciples." Subject: The conduct of the Christian at social festivities. V. 3: "And the wine failing, the Mother of Jesus saith to Him." Subject: The intercession of the Blessed Virgin. V. 4: "My hour is not yet come;" Our Lord does all things in season. V. 5: "Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye;" on obedience. V. 7: "Fill the water-pots with water;" co-operation with the grace of God. V. 9: "When the chief steward had tasted the water made wine." This miracle is a figure of the Last Supper, says St. Maximus. V. 11: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus..." It was a miracle of charity; on charity. "He manifested His glory;" how to merit true honor. "His disciples believed in Him;" one miracle was sufficient for them. On weakness or firmness in matters of faith.

Even single expressions may suggest new subjects. Thus the "dumb" devil in the Gospel suggests the subject of sacrilegious concealment of a sin in confession.

In selecting the subject let the preacher ask himself: "What is necessary, useful, appropriate for this audience

and for myself on this occasion, or during this time or season?"

The selection of the subject is followed by a thorough mental consideration of it: *a*) in its intrinsic nature, its properties, notes (explanation and illustration of the subject); *b*) in its truth and certainty (argumentation); *c*) in its causes and effects; *d*) in its various relations to other things: to God, to man, etc.; *e*) in its various circumstances of time, place, person; *f*) in the obstacles or dangers opposed to it, or the means and helps in its favor, etc.

Let, for example, "The Christian Faith" be chosen as the subject of the sermon. We may consider, 1. The nature, essence, and definition of Christian faith. What is meant by Christian faith? Faith is a gift of God, an interior light, which enlightens man and disposes him to believe firmly and beyond doubt all that God has revealed, and by His holy Church proposes to our belief, be it written or unwritten. Properties of faith: Faith must be humble, firm, universal. "Faith is a gift of God." What is the nature of this gift? It is the most precious gift of God—"the Father of mercies, from whom is every best and perfect gift." 2. The truth and certainty of faith. Proofs: *a*) History of the heathen nations of ancient times; *b*) of the present age; *c*) constant experience of all those who are without faith; *d*) praise of faith by Christ and the apostles; *e*) from the nature of the thing, etc. 3. Causes of faith: God's truth, wisdom, veracity, etc. Effects: illustrated by the effects of light: it enlightens, warms, comforts, instructs our intellect, moves our will. 4. Blessings of faith: it gives us security, peace, consolation in life and death; necessity of faith for the knowledge and love of God and for rendering ourselves acceptable to Him. 5. Examples of faith: Abraham, Moses, Noe, the three Magi, Mary, Peter, etc. 6. Our conduct with regard to faith: gratitude towards God for this gift, expressed especially by works of faith, compassion, and prayer for those that are without this gift. 7. Obstacles: pride, reading of dangerous books, association with infidels and scoffers at faith, neglect of prayer and the sacraments, a wicked life, etc. Means: the contraries to the obstacles.

The purpose of the meditation, therefore, is to invent the explanations and illustrations, the reasons of the

truth and obligation of the subject, the refutations, the motives and practical applications; in a word, the amplification of the subject according to the memorial verse: "Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando?" By means of these topics the subject is analyzed and considered in all its parts and from different points of view.¹

The composition of the sermon embraces the sketching and the conception of the sermon. The sketch is the methodical arrangement of the various points and ideas gathered in the meditation. It establishes the leading proposition and its divisions as well as the main ideas of the discourse. A good sketch insures unity, clearness, and order, prevents digressions, confusion, and repetition, and facilitates the conception and memorizing of the entire sermon.

In sketching his sermon the preacher must ever keep in view the proximate end and fruit of the sermon. He must know distinctly what is the proximate result that his sermon aims to attain. Let him, for example, say to himself: "I will to-day, with the grace of God, impart to my hearers a thorough knowledge, a firm conviction, a lively faith concerning this dogma; I will lead them to entertain a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, to make a good confession, to avoid this evil occasion, to practise this virtue." Without such a distinct and detailed purpose constantly kept in view during the composition of the sermon, it will necessarily often be obscure, vague, indefinite, and irrelevant, and remain barren of any practical results.

The division of the subject may take for its ground

¹ Valuable assistance for this meditation of our subject may be derived from the so-called "Preachers' Prompters," such as *Bibliotheca Concionatoria*, by V. Houdry; *Bibliotheca Manualis Concionatoria*, by T. Lohner; *Hortus Pastorum*, J. Marchant; *Homo Christianus*, P. Segneri, and others.

any of the points of view mentioned above in the meditation of the subject.¹

¹ 1. From the nature and qualities of the object: *v. g.*, The Holy Mass is a sacrifice, *a*) of praise; *b*) of expiation; *c*) of impetration. Our love for Jesus must be: *a*) active; *b*) patient; *c*) persevering. 2. From the arguments and motives: Almsgiving is a duty, *a*) of obedience, in view of the command of God; *b*) of gratitude, in view of the bounties of God, *c*) of penance, in view of the justice of God. 3. It may be taken from the causes: Men neglect to defend the cause of God, *a*) from a false prudence; *b*) from cowardly weakness. 4. From the effects: The Blessed Sacrament is, *a*) our light, *b*) strength, *c*) comfort. 5. From the circumstances: Three circumstances render death full of peril: *a*) the fact that there is but one death for us; *b*) that death is certain; *c*) that it comes unexpected. 6. From the conditions and limitations: Our penance will be persevering when we, *a*) carefully avoid the occasions of sin, *b*) combat the inclinations to sin, *c*) apply the means against sin. "We shall, *a*) all rise again, *b*) but we shall not all be changed." 7. From the lessons a mystery teaches: The institution of confession shows, *a*) God's omnipotence, *b*) God's mercy. 8. From the consequences or corollaries: We owe the Church, *a*) as children, love; *b*) as subjects, obedience; *c*) as members, support. 9. From mutual relations: *a*) The bad Christian condemns his faith; *b*) his faith condemns the bad Christian. 10. From various points of view: Mortal sin is an offence against God: *a*) in itself—as an act of disobedience and contempt of God; *b*) in its manner—committed in the presence of God; *c*) in its motives—for a trifle. The *a*) necessity, *b*) efficacy, *c*) conditions of prayer. 11. Proof and application; mode and manner; quality, value, means, etc., may likewise be used as grounds of division. Care must be taken not to connect too many and too various points in a division, lest it become impractical and illogical. 12. Even texts of Sacred Scripture and of the holy fathers may serve as reasons of division. Thus (Luke ii. 12) on the feast of Christmas: *a*) "*invenietis infantem*"—extreme self-abasement; *b*) "*pannis involutum et positum in præsepio*"—extreme poverty. The words of St. Augustine: "*In resurrectione Christi et miraculum et exemplum; miraculum ut credas: exemplum ut speres*," suggest the following division to Bourdaloue: *a*) The miracle of Christ's resurrection is an incontrovertible proof of His divinity, and therefore the foundation of our faith; *b*) the example of Christ is a pledge of our own resurrection, and thus the ground of our hope.

When the sketch is made the sermon is written out entire. The main purpose of this elaboration of the sermon is to clothe it in proper form and style. The preachers should choose the time most suitable, and finish without interruption at least a part of the discourse. He should always have his sketch before him and constantly refer to it. It is not necessary to search long for expressions that do not occur to him at the moment. It is better to use a synonymous term and correct it when reviewing the sermon. The logical division of the sermon should appear in the paragraphing of the written discourse. After some time the whole should be scrupulously reviewed and carefully corrected.

The next thing to do is to memorize the written sermon, either verbatim or substantially. The principal helps in memorizing are one's own meditation and conception of the sermon, a clear and intelligent manner of writing; loud recitation of the sermon, memorizing the individual parts first, and then only the whole sermon.

After impressing the discourse on his memory, the preacher should endeavor to imbue his mind and heart deeply with the subject, to assimilate it thoroughly, so that his mind be entirely penetrated with it. Lastly, he will, at least in the beginning of his ministry, practise the delivery of the sermon.

As concerns the disposition of the preacher on the day of preaching, he should avoid, as far as possible, fatigue and depression of his bodily or mental faculties. He should be confident, trust in God's assistance, fortify himself by prayer and by the intention to speak as an ambassador of Christ, solely for the honor of God and the welfare of souls. St. Augustine exhorts him to *pray* before he *preach*. In the pulpit, viewing his audience modestly and decorously, he should fix his mind upon that which he is immediately to say, with some atten-

tion to the next sentence and idea. If his memory fails him, he may recover himself by a brief pause, an extemporized repetition or amplification of the last thought, or by passing over to another part, or finally by referring to the manuscript.

After the sermon let him humble himself if he has not succeeded very well, thank God for good success, apply the moral lesson to himself, and beg God to bless his effort.

Book Second.

CATECHETICS.

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of God."—Mark x. 14.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY NOTIONS.

§5. Importance and Necessity of Catechetics.—The pastor, the minister of Christ, would fail grievously in his duties to his divine Master and towards his flock, and at the same time deprive himself of one of the greatest pleasures and consolations of the ministry, if he did not bestow particular, aye, his first and greatest attention, upon the instruction and religious training of youth. The yearning of the Heart of our divine Saviour to communicate His blessing and grace to children, and the delight of this divine Heart in their homage and affection is evident from various passages of the Gospel. Most conspicuous among these is that scene, recorded by all the evangelists, where Christ "embraced the children brought to Him, laid His hands upon them, and blessed them." It is most fully related by St. Mark (ch. x., v. 13 and foll.): "They brought to Him young children, that He might touch them. And the disciples rebuked those that brought them. Whom when Jesus saw, He was much displeased, and saith to them: Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and

forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Amen, I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into it; and embracing them and laying His hands upon them, He blessed them." Upon which a great catechist¹ remarks: "Can that seem insignificant to you which was sufficient to ruffle the great gentleness of Our Lord, to give Him displeasure, and to disturb the Fountain of all goodness? I do not remember any other passage of Holy Writ where Christ is related to have been much displeased at any action. Let us then take care, brethren, lest the displeasure of Christ fall upon us."

Another occasion where Christ plainly expressed the great pleasure He takes in the homage of youth was on the eve of His Passion. "When the chief priests and scribes heard the children crying in the temple, saying: 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' and moved with indignation, said to Him: 'Hearest Thou what these say,' Jesus answered: 'Yea, have you never read: Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise?'"

The books of Moses frequently remark that the first fruits of all things were to be offered to God. So emphatic is this law that it cannot but strike us how great a partiality God shows for these first offerings. But if such was the preference of God with regard to inanimate things, how much more must He value the first fruits of human life, of the human heart, of the first affections and homage of man in childhood and youth. He that would withdraw these living, rational first fruits from God would certainly meet a more terrible curse than the Israelite who withheld the first fruits of grain, bread, and the like.

The pastor who neglects the religious education of

¹ Gerson: *De Trahendis ad Christum Parvulis*. Consid. II.

youth fails grievously in his duty towards his flock, of which the children are the most precious portion, and hence most worthy and needful of his greatest solicitude. The religious training which the child receives generally determines his whole future life. The first impressions sink deep into the heart and are never again entirely wiped out. After many years of dissipation they are easily revived, and thus lead the soul back to the path of virtue. But more than all, the child has the most absolutely rightful claim to this training. As soon as he arrives at the age of reason he is entitled to the knowledge and love of God, and thereby to the sanctification of his youth. But since he cannot obtain this knowledge and be introduced to the service of God except through the ministration of others, he has a just claim upon this religious instruction and education.

There is no other age of life more open to religious instruction and persuasion than that of youth. If "the soul of man is instinctively Christian," the soul of the child is eminently so. It is a great mistake to suppose that religious ideas are above the capacity of the child. "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones," is true also in this respect. The youthful mind is easily attracted to religion, is naturally interested in religious service, and filled with respect and love for it; in a word, the mind and heart of the child are easily drawn to Christ.

He, then, who through neglect or indifference, or still worse, from a desire to cater to sectarian prejudice and hatred, would deprive the child of his religious training, or impair and curtail this training, would commit a crime which no possible censure could adequately condemn. No other individual crime could work such a far-reaching and irreparable damage to the helplessly dependent child. Such a man must either be intellect-

ually blind, or he must have drifted far away from the true spirit of the priesthood and of the Church.

86. The Church has at all times insisted emphatically on this religious education of youth. The Council of Trent (sess. xxiv., c. 4, de Ref.) commands "the bishop to take care that at least on the Lord's days and other festivals the children in every parish be carefully taught the rudiments of the faith and obedience towards God and their parents, by those whose duty it is and who shall be constrained thereunto by their bishops, if need be, even by ecclesiastical censure; any privileges and customs notwithstanding."

The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore devotes a special chapter to this subject (tit. vii., c. ii.): "It belongs to the ministry of Holy Mother Church to make known the divine mysteries to all men, but especially to the children and the unlearned. She has ever strained all her resources and endeavors to nourish these her children with the milk of heavenly doctrine. Hence the Council of Trent enjoined upon bishops to see that in every single parish the children be taught the rudiments of faith at least on Sundays and holy-days. The pastors of souls must make it their own personal business to feed the lambs of their flock. That heartless man would be altogether unworthy of the name of father who would refuse to break the bread to his starving child. It is our earnest desire, therefore, that the rectors of churches or their curates frequently visit the catechism classes on Sundays, the parochial schools on week-days, as also those colleges of boys and academies of girls that are not under the direction of priests. Teachers not distinguished by the sacerdotal character, be they religious or lay, are of great assistance in the instruction of youth, but they have not received the peculiar gift of teaching the word of God.

‘For the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth.’

“We then command pastors of souls to have an assiduous care of the young, especially at the time when they are to be prepared for their first Holy Communion. During this time the pastor himself, or his curate, shall teach the catechism three times every week for the period of at least six weeks (at least in the parish in which they reside, or which is easy of access to them). No one shall be admitted to the sacrament of Confirmation who is not well instructed concerning the nature and effects of this sacrament. We therefore exhort the bishop, who is about to confer this sacrament, to examine those to be confirmed either personally or through the priest. Let pastors, moreover, see to it that boys and girls receive a more thorough and explicit instruction in Christian doctrine and duties for two years after their first Communion.”

Aside from the serious obligation flowing from the nature of his position and from the positive law of the Church, the great happiness and consolation derived from this work of the ministry should easily induce the pastor to perform it with great zeal and assiduity. However poor his success may be in other fields of his sacred calling, it will always be most abundant and certain in catechetics. “Whatever seed you sow upon this acre,” says a zealous and saintly bishop of modern times, “will always bear a hundredfold fruit.” Through the children the pastor may exercise a most salutary influence upon their parents and upon the entire congregation. His work will not end with the present, but endure for a long future. For these children, well instructed and trained, will grow up to become good parents, and transmit to their posterity their own disposition and training.

It may be permitted to transcribe here a few words on this subject from that enthusiastic and successful catechist, Bishop Dupanloup:¹ "I owe everything to the catechisms, everything for my soul, everything for my ministry, everything for my heart. I would even say everything for my career.

"And first, everything for my soul; and here, gentlemen, I am not speaking only of the graces and special blessings which accompany a ministry which is so specially dear to Our Lord, of the love for the kingdom of heaven which naturally springs up in the heart of a priest by the happy necessity of preaching it to those for whom it is specially prepared, '*Talium est regnum cœlorum*,' nor of that faith in the Holy Eucharist, that living, tender, reverential faith, which is born in him by the happiness which is his of preparing these children, the blessed of God, to receive this great sacrament in their first Communion.

"For myself, when I said that I owe everything for my soul to the catechisms, it is principally in this way, and here is another admirable saying of M. Borderies:

"'My child,' he said to me one day when I had asked him of his charity to give me some counsel for my guidance, 'thanks to your catechism, and the necessity it entails upon you of preaching goodness to the children, I have only one word to say in reply, only one counsel to give you:

"'Be true, be sincere in your catechism, and you will always be a good priest.

"'Yes, be true; never be a liar; I mean, do yourself what you tell your children to do; practise yourself what you tell them to practise. In a word, never be a hypocrite, who says, but does not.'

¹ The Ministry of Catechising. The quotation is taken from the English translation published by Benziger Bros.

"I said that I owe to them everything *in my ministry*. The importance of the sacerdotal ministry includes, chiefly, preaching, the hearing of confessions, the management of a parish. Well, gentlemen, the catechism teaches all this.

"And first, it teaches how to preach. It nearly always makes you acquire a great facility of speech, a kind of eloquence—if one understands by that word a simple and clear, a true and natural language—going direct *ad rem* and *ad hominem*: two necessary conditions of real eloquence. There is no place there for points of rhetoric; you must look in your own heart and soul for that which is to reach the heart and soul of others; you must even seek in the heart and soul of those to whom you speak for what shall make them listen....

"But it is not only *preaching* that it teaches, but also the best manner of *hearing confessions*. Yes, hearing the confessions of children has a wonderful power in training for the great art of the direction of souls. No human respect comes in there, no cowardly yielding, no effeminacy; but yet there is charity, and the compassion so necessary for these lovable and feeble creatures. You learn there to go straight to a thing; to be true, clear, precise; to say plainly: this is good, this is wrong, this is dangerous; to go straight to the inner soul; to get out of routine and of confessions made only as a matter of routine; to put clear and prudent questions; to know really the state of a conscience. Finally, I do not hesitate to say that the catechism teaches us how to *govern*; it requires authority and it gives it, a firm and gentle, and above all, a watchful and attentive authority; these are the great characteristics of authority; well, they are more easy there than elsewhere. For myself, it is my deep and clear conviction: the

catechism, well worked, is above all things an apprenticeship in the art of governing.

"I said also 'everything for the *heart*,' for affection, for remembrance; there is enough there for the most loving heart. This pure affection takes possession of the soul, and leaves no place there for any other. It elevates, it detaches, it purifies. The remembrance of the joys of the catechism is stronger and deeper than anything else, an undying remembrance for myself and, I may say also, for the greater number of children I have brought up.... I might add that here again one meets with the most wonderful gratitude in return, far beyond what we know we deserve, and yet it must be said it is the most precious thing to be met with in this world."

87. Difficulties and how to Meet them.—In the exercise of his catechetical ministry the pastor may meet with very many difficulties.

The first difficulty arises from the nature of the subject-matter. This is super-sensible and to a great extent full of mystery. It is positive and determined, admitting no change or modification.

The method likewise presents various difficulties. It requires skill and attention always to select the proper matter and manner, ever to keep the end in view, and to avoid all unnecessary circumlocution. Again, it is not an easy matter for an adult, especially for a person who has devoted many years to higher studies, to step down to the level of the child's intellect and manner of feeling.

The greatest difficulty, however, arises from the children themselves; the levity and want of attention peculiar to their age increase the difficulty which their weak and unpractised minds and limited ideas already present. The external condition of the children is likewise

to be taken into account. Many children receive a poor or even a bad education at home, are surrounded by evil examples; they often live at a great distance from church and school, their poverty not unfrequently prevents their attendance from want of proper, decent clothing; the irreligious public schools hold out great inducements to them, etc., etc.

To overcome all these difficulties and obstacles the catechist needs a very large amount of love and patience, and an earnest, persevering zeal. He must excite and nourish this love and zeal in himself by frequently contemplating the ideal and the noble dignity of the catechetical ministry, its high office to develop the image and likeness of God in the youthful souls, and to lay the foundation of their temporal and eternal happiness. He must cultivate in himself the love for children which is natural to every pure heart, which finds delight in the candid, simple, and innocent nature of the child, and willingly becomes itself little for their sake, to teach them the way of truth and life. He ought on the other hand frequently to consider that incalculable damage is done to the child by neglecting his religious training, whilst a zealous exercise of this ministry brings untold blessing for the present and the future. Above all, he must ever look up to the noble examples which Christ, the angels, and the saints propose to him. The supreme example is Christ, the divine Friend of the children, as shown above. The holy guardian angels of the children set him a similar example. Their efforts in behalf of their youthful clients are unceasing and proportioned in love and zeal to the superior angelic nature. Besides these there are the human examples of so many saintly and apostolic men who devoted themselves to this ministry: St. Augustine, who wrote the standard work of all times, *De Cate-*

chizandis Rudibus; St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Origen, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Francis Xavier, Benedict XIV., St. Francis de Sales; the chancellor Gerson; St. Alphonsus Liguori, Massillon, Rollin, Boudon, Borderies, etc., etc.

The popes have granted various indulgences to encourage and reward the work of catechists. Pope Paul V., on the 6th of Oct., 1607, granted an indulgence of 100 days to teachers, parents, and all the faithful, as often as they instruct children in the Christian religion, and Pius IX., July 18th, 1877, granted an indulgence of three years on each of the feasts of the Blessed Virgin to those that assemble in schools or churches to learn the Christian doctrine, provided they go to Confession on those days, and an indulgence of 7 years if they go to Holy Communion.

After these preliminary reflections let us proceed to consider the subject itself.

88. Definition of Catechetics.—The word catechetics—(*Κατηχήσις*) is derived from *Κατὰ* and *ἦχος*, sound, *Κατηχῆν*, *Κατηχίζειν*, to address, to instruct, and hence signifies etymologically any verbal instruction. Catechist signifies the instructor, catechumen the one to be instructed, and catechism the manual of instruction. Profane writers soon restricted the meaning of the term to elementary instruction. In its biblical use the term likewise signifies sometimes Christian instruction in general, sometimes instruction in the rudiments of the Christian religion. In the language of the primitive Church, however, the word bore a wider meaning. It signified not only the instruction, but also the training and education of the neophyte to qualify him in every respect for his entrance into the Church by Baptism. The Church did not deem instruction alone sufficient, but devoted herself to the religious and moral training of the catechumens, thus endeavoring to secure grace

for them by prayer and devout practices, and to educate them to a Christian, edifying life by constant supervision and direction. This ideal of the Church for the catechetical ministry holds good even at the present day.

Hence the word *catechetics* is here to be taken in its wider sense, signifying not only the instruction, but no less the religious and moral training of Christian youth by the functions of divine service and by discipline.

CHAPTER II.

THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF CATECHETICS.

ART. I.

SELECTION OF MATTER FOR CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION.

§1. Primary Principles.—Objectively considered, the subject of instruction is the same for the child as for the adult, namely, the Gospel, the word of God—Christ crucified, the divine Revelation entire with regard to its extent as well as to its depth and intension, as it is transmitted by Scripture and tradition, and proposed by the infallible Church of Christ. The general limitation of this subject for catechetical instruction is determined by the catechisms prescribed by the Church. But this general matter admits and requires various other modifications and limitations according to the subjective condition of the catechumens. These can and must receive only that portion and measure which is suited to their capacity and their particular needs. Hence the leading points of view to guide us in determining the particular matter for instruction are these: the *capacity* of the children, the *end* of catechetical instruction, the *sphere* of life and activity of the children, the *circumstances* of *time*, *place*, and *persons* that surround them, and finally, the gradation necessitated by the continuous development of the child's faculties.

Above all, the catechist must keep in view the ma-

terial and formal education of his catechumens. Their material education comprises the religious knowledge previously acquired, which serves as a basis for further knowledge. Formal education signifies that practice and facility acquired in bestowing attention, readily comprehending, memorizing, thinking, judging, reasoning. The catechist must therefore each time select those truths only for which the catechumens possess the necessary preliminary knowledge, as well as the requisite mental ability and practice. Such truths as are yet above their capacity he must defer to a later period, meanwhile endeavoring to prepare them and to nourish in them a respectful longing for those truths. The first instruction is to serve as the foundation for future building. In this primary instruction therefore the catechist must rest content with imparting *correct* ideas concerning the most essential truths, even though such ideas remain as yet inadequate.

Another point of view which determines this selection is the *end* of catechetical instruction. This end is to lead the children to sanctify their youth and "to perfect them unto perfect men, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ." The catechist must therefore first teach that which is necessary for children, viz., to preserve the supernatural life received in baptism, to fear God, to participate in a profitable manner in divine service, and to lead a life conformable to their condition, fulfilling the duties which the state of childhood imposes.

Not only those truths, however, which serve the child immediately are to be chosen for catechetical instruction; this instruction must gradually include all that the catechumen will require in later life. It must be a relatively complete instruction, providing for present and future religious wants. The more necessary must ever

precede the less necessary or that which is merely useful.

On the other hand, the catechist must exclude everything from his instruction which might be a source of harm or danger to his charges, *v. g.*, objections against faith, many things concerning the sixth commandment harmful to their innocence and simplicity, or anything that might weaken their filial love and respect. He must exclude likewise everything unnecessary and purposeless that would merely vex the memory of the children, and be of no practical value to them; for example, all excessive explanation, defining, proof, as likewise all that is intended merely for display at the examinations.

Finally, the *circumstances* of time, place, and person must ever be taken into account by the catechist, inasmuch as they render the treating of certain truths necessary or very useful. With regard to time, he may be obliged to consider the amount of time given him for instruction, and will herein be guided by the principle: The less time given, the greater the necessity of limiting himself to the essentially necessary. Or, again, he may take into consideration the time of the ecclesiastical year, and may treat the incidental feasts and holy seasons, the sacred ceremonies and practices, and the sacred mysteries celebrated by them, thus initiating the children gradually into the spirit of divine service, and enabling them to participate in the life of the Church, which reveals itself in this service.

The circumstance of *place* obliges the catechist to select those truths mainly and develop them more explicitly which the catechumens need in their peculiar surroundings in the city or in the country, in the company of non-Catholic children, etc., to protect them against the prejudices, sins, and dangers to which they

are particularly exposed, and to ground them firmly in the opposite truths and virtues.

With regard to *persons*, finally, the catechist may show a due deference to the legitimate wishes of parents, guardians, provided this does not interfere with the welfare of the class, or the welfare of the individual children,—as when they demand a too early admittance to the sacraments, especially to First Holy Communion.

The *pedagogical* succession requires that those subjects which are the basis and prerequisites of other subjects should be treated first, and that instruction in Bible history *precede* that of the catechism.

ART. II.

CONTINUATION.—BIBLE HISTORY, 'THE' MAIN SUBJECT IN PRIMARY CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION.

90.—Why should the first religious instruction be imparted in the form of Bible history? For psychological, historical, and practical pedagogical reasons.

And first for psychological reasons, since all knowledge and mental development of man begins with concrete representations.

The faculty of perception is the first active faculty of man, and only later on does reason come into activity, comparing, distinguishing, arranging the perceptions. These perceptions form the material from which our knowledge is built up. The catechist, therefore, ought to follow the natural order of mental development, and select for those catechumens who are still in the first stage of this development concrete representations, object lessons, namely, Bible history, which is nothing else than a connected series of facts and of concrete images.

There is, besides, an historical reason for this prefer-

ence. The divine revelations were given to man, not in the doctrinal form, but in the form of fact—as sacred history. Instruction in the divine revelations therefore would not be complete without instruction in their historical form. This historical form, however, should be the principal basis of instruction at that age which requires and best understands the historical method. The Catholic Church has ever adopted this method; St. Augustine has commended it in his work *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, although this work was written mainly for the instruction of adults. In celebrating the facts of Revelation and Redemption and proclaiming them to mankind in the course of the ecclesiastical year, the Church observes this method to the present day.

Finally, practical pedagogics demand that Bible history should form the main subject of primary religious instruction. Historical instruction is more animated and realistic, and therefore more easily grasped and received with interest and pleasure by the children. Historical images, again, impress themselves more deeply and lastingly upon the memory than abstract teachings. Moreover, all the purposes of instruction are easily and simultaneously attained by such instruction, since the concrete, living realities of history serve not only to enlighten and convince the mind, but likewise to appeal to the affections and the will, thus developing and elevating all the faculties of the soul. Finally, abundant material is treasured up for future doctrinal instruction, which will prove eminently useful in furnishing examples for explanation and demonstration, and for moving the will. These concrete historical facts of Revelation will forever remain pillars of faith and living fountains for refreshing and strengthening spiritual life, whilst abstract teaching too often succumbs to the sophistry of the passions.

Bible history, then, must form the basis, the main subject and guide in primary religious instruction of children. The *main* subject, because it must not be supposed that the first catechetical instruction should consist in a mere narrative of the history of Revelation. On the contrary, in the course of the narrative the religious and moral lessons contained in it should be pointed out and proposed in doctrinal form, as far as the capacity of the children will permit. This should be done especially with the central ideas, viz., the nature and attributes of God, the end of man, sin, and Redemption, the Old Law as a type of the New Law and a preparation for Christ, etc.

In Bible history again, the New Testament should, in the main, precede the Old Testament as the subject-matter of instruction. Moreover, the relations and lessons, especially of the New Testament, together with the explanation of the Ecclesiastical Seasons of the year, should always be connected with and referred to the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. The child should be made to understand from his earliest years that whatever is narrated in sacred history, whatever is symbolized by the crucifix and sacred images and commemorated by the Ecclesiastical Seasons is presented in reality in the tabernacle on the altar. All instruction should directly tend to bring the child nearer to Our Lord in the Holy Sacrament.

An admirable specimen of "Historic Instruction for one year of the Little Catechism" is to be found in Dupanloup's *Ministry of Catechising*, p. 284.

ART. III.

CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION IN DOCTRINAL FORM.—SELECTION OF THE CATECHISM.

91.—When the subject-matter of catechetics has been communicated in the form of Bible history and at the

same time gradually proposed in a doctrinal manner, and when the mind of the child has matured and been supplied with a store of ideas, the catechetical instruction must be given mainly in the systematic doctrinal form of the catechism. The catechism has been prescribed by ecclesiastical authority, and its form and method are in themselves appropriate and useful.

The mind in this stage of development becomes more and more inclined to reflect, to compare perceptions and ideas, to classify and arrange them systematically, thus acquiring greater unity, accuracy, clearness, and security in thinking and judging. It learns to distinguish the essential from the non-essential, and to apply the knowledge acquired to life and the daily circumstances of life more easily, correctly, and thoroughly.

Furthermore, Revelation has been made not solely in the form of history but also in doctrinal form. Thus the Apostles' Creed presents the teachings of *faith* in systematic doctrinal form, the Our Father the subject of Christian *hope* in the same form, and the decalogue the outline of Christian morality—Christian *charity*.

Experience too has proved the value and comparative necessity of this form of instruction, especially against modern heretics. These sought to propagate error through the effectual medium of the catechism, and thereby induced the Church to counteract this danger by the publication and introduction of the Catholic catechism.

The selection of the catechism itself belongs to the Ordinary, and not to the catechist. The last Plenary Council of Baltimore says on this point: "It is of great importance that the catechism be perfect in every respect. Various catechisms, however, which are in use amongst us, are faulty, not suited to the capacity of children, or defective in some other respect. Besides,

many of our faithful frequently change their residence, or their children frequent various schools, and hence they must experience great inconvenience from the large number and variety of catechisms that are in vogue in these provinces. After mature deliberation we therefore resolve that a committee of bishops be appointed, who shall select a catechism, or if necessary remodel one of the current catechisms, or prepare a new edition, as they may deem necessary or opportune. This work they shall then submit to the Most Rev. Archbishops, who shall again revise the whole, and finally have it published. As soon as possible after the publication of this catechism all pastors and teachers, religious as well as secular, shall be obliged to use this catechism.

“Since this catechism, however, which is to be published in English, is prepared with the view not only to promote uniformity in the matter and manner of teaching, and thus of removing the inconveniences mentioned above, but likewise of consulting the peculiar position and circumstances of Catholics in this country, we ardently desire that the Catholics of other tongues than the English make use of a translation of this catechism. Moreover, since the children of German or French or other descent often attach themselves to churches where the English language is used exclusively for Christian instruction, we recommend that the children who speak both languages and reside among a people speaking English only, learn the aforesaid catechism also in English.”

Although this catechism was published not long after the Council and immediately translated into the various languages spoken in this country, it does not seem to have found the favor expected, and various dioceses continue, with the express or tacit consent of the Or-

dinaries, to use the catechism they used before. Many schools of different nationalities use the English catechism alongside that of their own tongue; others, again, using their own catechism, explain it both in their own and in the English language; others, finally, employ their own tongue exclusively in Christian instruction. As we shall dwell on this subject more fully in another volume, it may be sufficient here to inculcate the general principle, that the language is the medium of instruction, and that like all other means it must be adapted to the end. If in any locality the children are so habituated to think, reflect, and reason in English as to render study and instruction in their mother tongue a burden and an impediment, it would certainly be preposterous to insist on a certain medium regardless of the fact whether it be subservient or subversive of the end. In other localities again, where whole communities of a certain nationality exist, and the children continue to speak and think in their mother tongue, religious instruction will be most readily and successfully conveyed in that tongue. But even to these cases the recommendation of the Council applies. In all these questions the supernatural end is to be kept in view—the spiritual welfare of the child—and all other views are to be made subordinate to that. No one can help admiring the discreet and moderate language of the Council in this connection. This example of a discreet and enlightened zeal must be the guiding star in all discussions on this point, especially where the question of supreme importance—the religious instruction of the child—is concerned.

CHAPTER III.

DISPOSITION OF THE CATECHETICAL MATTER.

ART. I.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATTER FOR THE DIFFERENT CLASSES.

92. *Instruction in Well-regulated Parochial Schools.*—For a proper disposition and division of the matter for religious instruction it is necessary: *a*) that the children be classified according to their mental progress and previous knowledge, and to each class be assigned the proper matter; *b*) that the whole course of religion be gone over every year or at least every two years; and *c*) to have a definite, detailed programme.

As the elementary school-course in regularly organized parishes in this country extends generally over six or seven years, a good classification of pupils in religious instruction, as a rule, will unite each two years into one class. The lowest class might form an exception, and receive instruction by itself. Thus we should have the first year—the lowest class—by itself, the second and third, the fourth and fifth, the sixth and seventh year forming a combined class each, which we may call the second, third, and fourth class of religious instruction.

Catechetical instruction should begin at once even with the smallest children that attend school, and should not be delayed until later years under the very

mistaken impression that nothing can be done at so tender an age. The principal matter for instruction will be the common prayers: Our Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed, the decalogue. All children at this age should know or learn these prayers, and learn to say them well and distinctly. The best means for this end is the daily loud recital in common of these prayers. It is best, though, to say the larger part of these prayers at the opening of the school, whilst at the closing a short prayer only should be said, since the fatigue and anxiety of the children to get out would prove a serious obstacle to devotion in reciting long prayers at that time. These prayers then offer sufficient matter for rudimentary instruction. The very invocation of the Our Father teaches us the existence of God and His reward of the good. Heaven and the common paternity of God are subjects which easily interest and delight children. "Hallowed be Thy name" teaches the praying child the reverence with which he is to pronounce the holy names, and the devotion with which he must address God in prayer. "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" will give occasion to speak of the supreme dominion of God over all things. "Give us this day our daily bread." Here the catechist may explain how all blessings and bounties, bodily and otherwise, food, drink, clothing, etc., come from the "Giver of every good gift." "Forgive us our trespasses," etc., will furnish an opportunity for explaining the rudiments of the doctrine of sin, etc. All this must be given in a most elementary form, more with a view to lead the children to say their prayers with devotion and reverence than to give a systematic instruction. The other prayers are to be similarly explained.

From this step the catechist will gradually lead the

child on to the historical course of religious instruction. He may for this purpose give, as it were, object lessons, with the crucifix, and the images of Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints as "objects." Explaining the crucifix, he will tell the child of the Saviour, of His incarnation, of His great love for man, His special love for children, etc. All this must be done of course in the most simple terms and phrases. The child has a wonderful understanding for the subject of love, and these primary instructions on the love of Our Saviour will bury themselves deeply in the youthful heart.

After having thus briefly and elementarily and rather occasionally than in a formal, systematic manner made the child acquainted with the incarnate and crucified Redeemer, the catechist will do well to turn his attention to the holy sacrifice of the Mass and the matter of divine worship. He will tell the child of the identity between the crucified and the sacramental Saviour, of the Real Presence, the consequent reverence and devotion we must show Him especially at the holy sacrifice. Thus he will render the child apt to receive abundant graces through his participation in divine service. He may very profitably take occasion of the principal seasons of the ecclesiastical year, for instance, of Christmas, Easter, etc., to explain the mysteries of these seasons, in a manner suitable to children.

The second and third year, or where only six years compose the school term, the second year, would be the class of historical religious instruction. The main matter of instruction is now that of Bible history. Later on the catechism may be used along with the Bible history, provided the latter be always retained in this course as the principal subject of instruction. The best Bible history will, *cæteris paribus*, be that one which

is best illustrated. In this course the catechist may, especially since he has taught the rudiments the year before, begin with the Old Testament, and follow the order of the History. In connection with Bible history the catechist is able to teach all the principal truths of Christianity. The creation, the fall of man, consequent sinfulness and inclination to sin of all mankind, the punishment of sin, the history of the Ten Commandments, the figures and prophecies of the Redeemer, the Incarnation, the teaching and miracles of Our Lord, the Redemption, the founding of the Church, the history of the Church, etc. Certainly all this must be taught, as we shall see in another chapter, in a rudimentary form, and in language suited to the capacity of little children.

The third class, comprising the third and fourth, or the fourth and fifth year of the parochial-school course, receives religious instruction principally according to the method and form of the catechism. The smaller edition of the catechism, if different editions are used, is the one to be employed here. The advantage of the catechism form for those whose mind is sufficiently developed lies principally in securing better attention, and in formally training the mind. The catechist in explaining the catechism must address himself not only to the intellect, but endeavor to excite in the heart of the child a love for the truth conveyed, and holy resolutions to practise it. It is not necessary that he should in this class fully analyze every term, but the analysis must always be correct, as far as it goes. With regard to questioning the children, it will be better to put the question sometimes to a single child, sometimes to the whole class, sometimes to any one that knows.

It must be always remembered that the purpose of religious instruction is to feed and develop the super-

natural life, and hence proximately to develop the infused virtue of faith. It is therefore a serious, aye, disastrous mistake, to suppose that this instruction must first develop the natural reasoning powers, first make the child a rational being, and, then only, a Christian. The catechism is not to lead the child to discover the truth. Its office is to represent objectively the positive truth, founded on the authority of God and of the Church. The explanation of the catechism must be accompanied by a narration of the facts of Revelation, and examples from the history of the Church. Bossuet, in his catechism for the diocese of Meaux, says: "Unite with your instruction historical illustrations from Holy Writ or from reliable writers. Such narratives excite attention and cause the child to receive willingly and gladly the religious truths. When you give instruction on a certain mystery, or on a sacrament, you must premise the narrative of the fact of the mystery or the institution of the sacrament. These narratives must be presented in a manner that will prove attractive to the imagination. Thus will the mind and heart of the child be taken captive."

The fourth or last class of religious instruction will comprise the last two years of the school-course.¹ The principles and rules for this class are substantially the same as for the previous one. The matter, however, must be more extensive, including all those subjects which the growing age of the child renders necessary; and the method of explanation likewise must be more ample and thorough than before. For the same reason the larger edition of the catechism (where different editions are in use) is employed.

¹ In all these classes it is supposed that they are not too large, for it is impossible to give attention to the individual child when the number exceeds, say, eighty children.

93. Instruction of Children who cannot attend a Parochial School.—Where it is impossible to have a parochial school, and the children are obliged to attend the public school, the pastor must in every possible manner endeavor to make up for the sad loss the children suffer. He will organize special catechism classes, to be taught as often during the week as is possible for him and for the children. He will show these children special kindness and solicitude, for the reason also that, growing up in an irreligious atmosphere, they are apt to acquire a dread of religious subjects and persons and to look upon religious instruction as something supererogatory, unnecessary, and foreign to daily life and thought.

On the missions that can be visited but rarely by the priest it is necessary to appoint the most suitable layperson to act as catechist, and to point out to him, or to supply him with, such books and helps as will qualify him for his sublime task. When a priest is unable to attend a mission on Sundays, he ought to visit it at least on week-days as often as feasible, with the purpose mainly of imparting this instruction. The lack of Sunday service, where it is inevitable, will not work as great harm as the want of catechetical instruction for the children.

Children who are taken from school at an early age to be put to work must receive separate and private instruction, either in the evening, if they are then at leisure, or on Sundays, at an hour when they are most likely to come.

In the case of children living at a great distance from the church, it is customary in many places—and it is often the only alternative—that they be sent to the city or near the church, or to any other place where they may receive this instruction at least for some time

previous to being admitted to the sacrament of Penance, or especially to their First Holy Communion. If the child be poor and unable to defray the expense of paying his board at such a place, the parents or the pastor will generally be able to find some Catholic family charitable enough to volunteer to support the child during that time. "He that shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me."

In all these extraordinary cases it is far better to use a small catechism together with a small Bible History, and if time permits, to review that once or repeatedly, than to use a large edition, which will be above the comprehension of such children, and which their time will not allow them to finish.

The pastor must ever remember his responsibility for the individual child, and reflect that neglect of a child is far more pernicious than the neglect of an adult member of his flock. It will be impossible for the child to practise religion if he has not received a sound religious instruction, and to refuse or neglect to give him that instruction is almost identical with casting him away from the Church, keeping him from God and Christ, and dooming him to eternal perdition.

ART. II.

SUBJECTS OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE IN CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION.

94. Although the entire Christian doctrine is to be explained in catechetical instruction, and it is a mistake to omit distinct parts as too difficult for the comprehension of children, yet there are some subjects of special practical importance for supernatural life, and hence of special necessity for Christian instruction.

The principal external practices of Christian life are

the reception of the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, the attendance at holy Mass and other acts of divine worship. The interior life of the Christian has for its basis and essence the acts of the three divine virtues: faith, hope, and charity. Therefore these acts must receive the special attention of the catechist. The children must be well instructed concerning what is required to excite in the proper manner these acts of faith, hope, and charity, contrition, and all other religious acts and affections. These acts are expressed in the ordinary prayers taught the child. The first thing necessary, then, for the child is to learn these prayers. But this is only the beginning. The catechist must explain the *reasons*, the formal object, the motive of these acts, in detail, and in an unctuous manner, and thus lead the children to the practice of exciting these supernatural acts then and there in their hearts. It is very difficult for most men to consider and ponder on supernatural truths. This difficulty is easily removed by teaching children in a practical manner how to do this. The catechist must not only point out in a cold and careless manner the supernatural motives of these acts, but inculcate them clearly, vividly, and impressively, and thus excite in the hearts of the children the dispositions expressed by these formulas. This is not a difficult task, provided the catechist himself possess and cherish in his heart these dispositions. The heart of the child is very easily impressed and opened to the action of grace.

One means of communicating easily and fully the ideas of these religious acts to the mind of the child is to illustrate them by historical examples. For this purpose the examples from Bible history are most available and successful; contrition, for instance, is best illustrated by the history of Adam and Eve, David, the

beautiful parable of the prodigal son, Peter, Magdalene, etc.

Another equally important subject for catechetical instruction is prayer. It is indeed of supreme importance to teach the children to pray well, the more so, as parents frequently neglect this. To this end the child must first learn by heart good formulas of prayer. Particular attention must at the same time be paid to external devotion. The children must be accustomed to say the prayers slowly, distinctly, piously, to conduct themselves reverently, seriously. This is the preliminary to the explanation of the prayer, which teaches the child not only the meaning of the words, but enables him to excite in his heart the feelings expressed by prayer.

An effectual means of leading the child to pray with devotion and earnestness is to inculcate the truth that of our own selves we are "not sufficient even to think anything," *i. e.*, supernaturally good. This truth is impressively taught by beginning the various acts, especially those of a religious nature, by the invocation of the Holy Spirit.

The other religious practices essential to Christian life are the reception of the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, the attendance at Mass, and other acts of divine worship. If these acts receive no more attention in catechetical instruction than any other point of Christian doctrine, the children will lack essential elements for supernatural life which a later period can never supply. On the other hand, the catechist who brings children to perform these acts well contributes greatly towards their interior peace and well-being on earth, and the attainment of their happiness in heaven. With regard to the sacrament of Penance, the catechist must enter into all the details necessary

to a worthy reception of this sacrament. Above all, the firm disposition must be implanted in the children never, and on no account, knowingly to omit a sin in confession; they must be practised in eliciting acts of contrition and be led to appreciate its absolute necessity.

A further point of surpassing importance is the dignity and greatness of sanctifying grace, and the corresponding baseness and misery of mortal sin. The children must from early youth learn to fear mortal sin above all other evils in the world.

The impression that a child must not be instructed concerning sins against the sixth commandment is certainly erroneous. The conscience of the child must at an early date be rendered alive to the nature of these sins, since otherwise they may work sad havoc for years in the young soul, the child all the while having but a faint idea of their wickedness. The catechist can with some labor shape his instruction in such a manner as to escape all risk of attaching their minds to the sin, instead of inspiring horror and detestation of it.

ART. III.

CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION AFTER FIRST HOLY COMMUNION.

95. On the Necessity of such Instruction.—Bishop Dupanloup¹ says: "Education in the order of religious things means the complete, solid, strong, finished education of the mind, the heart, and the whole life. But for this education does the age of childhood suffice? Evidently not.

"For this education we need also the age of adolescence, that age when the mind, having become more

¹ Ministry of Catechising, p. 454, and following.

intelligent, can enter into the depths of Christian truth, can understand the economy of Christian morality, and the necessity for its most severe precepts; we need those years when the heart is strongest for attaching itself to good, when virtue, having by its early struggles been initiated into the great warfare which awaits it, is most manly and feels all the value of the power which religion offers to man in preserving and delivering him from the contagion of evil.

“And besides, what does experience show us? What becomes of all those children whom you have brought to their First Communion with so much zeal and labor? You know that bad examples and bad passions are not long in getting possession of them again, that it is only a few who persevere in the practice of religion; the others very soon give up everything. The greater number of boys, more than all, escape you; those whom you save are like the ears picked up in the field after the harvest. The harvest is reaped by vice, impiety, and the devil, and you have only what escapes them.

“But if unhappily this be so, is it not a sacred duty to do all in our power to prevent such misfortune? Can we suppose we have accomplished our task when we have simply cast the good seed into these young souls, if we neglect to care for its growth? Is this poor little child of twelve years strong enough to do without our support, to go on his way by himself? and if the years on which he is entering are the most perilous, shall we have done all that his soul, his eternal salvation demands, if we leave him to himself, just at the time when he has most need of us? No, all that we have said goes to show the absolute necessity of this catechetical instruction, which gathers up the fruits of previous instruction, and without which all that has been done hitherto would be lost.

"In this catechetical course a plan of high and attractive instructions is carefully arranged and followed out, and thus the children are thoroughly instructed in the whole of Christianity; there again, by touching exhortations mingled with the instructions, they are given advice suited to their age, their position, their duties, their needs, their dangers; there, finally, they are trained to the hallowing of Sunday, to frequent attendance at the house of God, to all the practices of Christian life.

"In the country these catechetical classes are no less possible than in cities, though they may present special difficulties.

"The more the first natural education has been wanting, or perhaps has even taught them evil, the more is it necessary that Christian education should come to the help of these poor children, should lift them up, should awaken in them more delicate feelings, should teach them to honor themselves, to treat themselves with respect.

"The catechist must not content himself with waiting for the children to come. I must continually repeat, if they do not come of themselves, he must go to look for them, he must run after them, as a shepherd after his flock; here above all he must practise, with the zeal and affection of a good shepherd, the '*compelle intrare*' of the gospel.

"You may say: they escape from us; the First Communion once made, we see them no more. But is it not that we have let them go?

"They escape from us; but in the presence of God, do we do all that is necessary to bring them back? Do we go where they are to find them, after the example of the Master, who spent Himself in apostolic journeys through the towns, in the villages, in the desert, on the

borders of the lake, on the mountains, every place in which there were souls, to whom He brought the gospel?

"The apostle St. Paul, the great catechist, teaches us himself; did he not go, *per domos*, from house to house, from door to door, to teach? And we, in our turn, do we seek out these dear children in their homes, or if need be, out in their fields? These poor children who do not come back, are they not themselves the lambs, the wandering sheep, of which the gospel speaks? And what does the good Shepherd do? Is He satisfied with being ready to receive the lost sheep when they shall return? No; He runs after them, He pursues them, He brings them back to the fold on His shoulders."

96. With Regard to the Special Means of Attracting Children to these catechetical instructions the same zealous and experienced bishop gives the following hints:

"I make attendance at the catechism an article of the rule of life marked out at the time of the First Communion, and a very honorable reward is given every month for the observance of this article.

"I show them what advantages they gain from the indulgences attached to the attendance at the catechism and the prayers there recited.

"I try to make them see that they need this help if they are to be really instructed in their religion.

"In order to make the catechism a thing greatly to be honored, you [the clergy of his diocese] have yourselves found out and applied admirable stimulants and methods with unfailing effect. These stimulants are Privileges, Honors, Rewards, Festivals, even games, and good and pleasant diversions. At the same time and with equal fertility of invention, you have been able to impart a very strong interest to the meetings themselves, and to create a great respect for the cate-

chism by ingenious methods, and by exercises which charm and attract both parents and children.

"One Curé writes: 'The children of the catechism, boys and girls, wear badges of honor; the boys a cross or a medal, the girls a medal.'

"In some places a 'Roll of Honor' is put on the church door, and great is the desire of each to see his own name there. The parents, as they come into the church, look eagerly through the list, and are proud if they find the names of their own children there.

"The children who are preparing to make their First Communion should be the basis of this catechism class. The chief difficulty in this class is to secure the attendance of the boys; but in the catechisms for First Communion you have a nucleus formed, to which others naturally join themselves.

"The best time for this instruction is neither before nor after, but with Vespers [with us between Vespers and Benediction]; for this great and unanswerable reason, that then the parents, the grown-up people of the parish, can profit by it.

"There are some who insert into their instruction stories or readings taken from the lives of some young saints, who may serve as models for the children. It is excellent. But this again demands that it be well chosen, well prepared, for nothing must be read which is not striking or interesting.

"The grand and final conclusion of my story is this: that to do this work well, you must, above all things, love the children. No doubt the catechism is a work of instruction, of faith, and of understanding, but it is above all, in its most important, as in its most humble departments, a work of charity and of love. Whoever does not love the children, let him leave it alone; he is not made for this work.

“What is the necessity of such a love? Because, in such a work, you meet with so much labor, with such serious difficulties, with such numerous and fatiguing details; you have also to learn such deep secrets, to practise such delicate art to win these young souls, that divine love alone can inspire you. ‘*Amas Me? Pasce agnos Meos.*’”

We have quoted at such length from the renowned author because he so well defines and points out the necessity and method of this course of instruction after First Holy Communion. Every line of the quotation applies with equal if not with greater force to this country. In some parishes the children are obliged to attend this instruction for four years after their First Communion, in others three, in others again two years. The last ought certainly to be the minimum term.¹ Every means ought to be resorted to to secure a full attendance, and it will always be better to abstain from severe measures as long as gentle means avail; a judicious system of offering rewards, premiums, etc., for faithful attendance as well as efficient application will generally be sufficient. The pastor who succeeds in this work brings up for Christ and the Church a godly congregation, while if he fail in this respect he will have little reason to congratulate himself on any other success he may achieve.

¹ III. Council Balt., No. 218.

CHAPTER IV.

FORM AND METHOD OF CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION.

ART. I.

FORM AND METHOD IN GENERAL.

97. To Determine the General Form and Method of catechetical instruction, we must take into consideration the mental capacity of the children, their sphere of life, and finally the nature and peculiarities of the doctrines themselves.

With regard to the mental capacity, the method of instruction must be suited to the nature of the human soul and the laws of its development and activity. The child must therefore be led from the easy to the more difficult, from the sensuous perception to the mental idea, always beginning with those truths which require the exercise of a lower faculty only, less practice in thinking, and less preliminary knowledge; hence from history to doctrine, from perception to idea, etc. We must proceed from the known to the unknown, from the sensible to the super-sensible, and explain the latter by the former.

The particular should always precede the universal, the constituent elements (notes) precede the idea; in a word, the analytical method (taken in its logical sense) must be employed. Finally, doctrines which

are necessary for the proper understanding of other doctrines must be first explained; for example, the belief in God before the doctrine of the Divinity of Our Lord.

Example of the analytical method: the explanation of contrition.¹ Instead of giving at once the grammatical explanation of sorrow and detestation and a firm resolution, the catechist will by a familiar example make the child feel its value. "What would your feelings be," I would say to him, "if in a great passion you raised your hand against your father and severely hurt him?" The child would immediately answer that he would be very sorry for doing such a thing, and that he would always grieve for it. "Well, my child, that sorrow, that grief, which you would feel, is what is called sorrow and detestation. Would you after that again strike him?" No, sir, not for anything. "Well, then, that disposition is what is called a firm resolution." Afterwards I would make him understand that by mortal sin we revolt against God, who is our Father, that we again nail Jesus to the cross; that done, it will not be difficult to make him understand that we all should have a great sorrow for our sins, and that we should be firmly resolved not to commit sin any more. "If you had committed a grievous sin against God, who is so good, would you not grieve very much also? Would you not feel great sorrow?" Yes. "Well, that sorrow is called contrition. Would you ever again commit such a grievous sin?" No. "Well, that intention is called a firm resolution." Now let the question: What is contrition? be proposed, and the child will at once understand the answer in the catechism, and will be delighted at knowing so well that which appeared so difficult to him before.

¹ Catechism by Rev. P. Power.

Not only the mental capacity, but also the sphere and the circumstances of the child's life must be taken into consideration. If the purpose and end of the instruction is to be attained, it is necessary that the doctrines be always applied to the life of the child, and that in doing this the conditions and circumstances of this life, as well as its duties, be ever kept in view. Hence it follows again that those truths be taught first which affect directly the life of the child; for example, his duties towards himself and his neighbor, his duties towards his parents, brothers, sisters, teachers, school-mates, etc., before the duties, *v. g.*, to temporal rulers.

With regard to the doctrines themselves, the same rule is to be observed in Catechetics as in Homiletics; the proper connection and order must be observed between the doctrinal and moral truths, the truths of reason and those of Revelation.

Although the doctrinal truths are to be gone through connectedly before the moral truths, care must be taken to unite with every doctrinal teaching the moral application resulting from it, and likewise with every moral truth the doctrine on which it is based. The doctrine furnishes the motive for obeying the moral law, and the moral teaching applies the doctrine to practical life.

This practical application is indispensable in Catechetics, because the children are unable to make it without the aid of the catechist, and without it the instruction is of little value. The doctrine is treated as a merely speculative subject, which the child learns for examination, but not as a matter pertaining to God and to eternal salvation, as a subject affecting the innermost heart of man and his whole external life. The catechist should therefore bestow special attention upon these applications of teachings to life. He must not be discour-

aged by an apparent want of success herein, but ever strive to render them as correct, natural, and easy, as pertinent to the present and proximate future necessities of the children as possible. In the course of time the whole range of the duties of childhood will come within the explanations.

These practical applications may also be drawn out by questions, so that the child himself may make the application. The first application will be quite general, and must be specified by other questions, and referred to the life of the child by naming time, place, person, etc., when, where, how, and towards whom such acts must be performed.

98. It would be a **Sad Mistake** to separate the truths of reason from those of Revelation, and explain the former first under the pretext that the child must first be civilized and then Christianized. A celebrated catechist brands this method as treason against the Creator and a crime against the child. It would violate the reverence due to the authority of God and would leave the child under a lasting impression of his being entirely independent of his Creator, and of being his own law-giver. This would be nothing less than moral murder of the child in the strictest sense of the word. The authority of God is thus placed in the background and the child is led to look upon religion as his own work, and to retain this religion only as long as it suits his sensual pleasure. In our time, when the necessity and power of authority are so extensively ignored and despised, the catechist must more than ever impress deeply on the mind of the child this power, practise him early to acquire a facility of faith, and bar the way against infidelity by representing the whole Christian doctrine as a gracious revelation of God to man.

ART. II.

FORM AND METHOD OF CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION IN PARTICULAR.

99. The aim of all religious instruction, and hence of the particular method employed for this purpose, is to lead the catechumen to know and understand the truths of Christian faith, to be convinced of them, to subject his affections and will to be controlled by them, and to govern by them his interior and exterior life. For the proper understanding and thorough knowledge of those truths, however, it is necessary to comprehend their constituent elements, the various ideas and terms which compose the truth. In order then to lead his pupils to a correct, clear, thorough, comprehensive, and practical knowledge of religion, the catechist must begin with imparting, explaining, confirming, and representing agreeably to the affections and will the individual ideas—the elements of which the truth is composed.

To do this successfully the catechist must first of all ascertain the amount and character of the knowledge which the children previously possess, taking into account their home (whether in city or country), their surroundings, the position and occupation of their parents, their home education, etc. It will not be necessary to communicate and explain all ideas; it is sufficient if the leading ones which form the body of the truth be developed. As for the others, it will often suffice to substitute a word better known in place of one less familiar, *v. g.*, *always* for *continually*, *useful* for *serviceable*, *place* or *home* for *abode*, etc.

As a rule, a clear idea of anything is deemed sufficient, and it need not be distinct. That idea is clear which enables us to distinguish the object from others.

It is distinct when in addition we discern the essential notes of the object.

It is a serious mistake to burden the memory and mind of the child with a multitude of scholastic definitions, and thus to give attention almost exclusively to the mental development to the detriment and neglect of the will and the affections. "I would rather feel compunction than know how to define it," says the Imitation of Christ. The principal religious and moral ideas, however, especially those which are frequently confounded in every-day life with other cognate ideas, must be accurately defined, so that the children know the distinctive notes of the idea and object.

All our mental representations have for their object either a being, or a quality, condition, or activity of a being. This object again is either sensible or super-sensible. The former may be perceived by the external senses, or the internal sense, or by both. A sensuous representation, which has for its object an individual thing, is called percept; ¹ a representation that may apply to various objects is termed a concept; a representation of something super-sensible is an idea.

All the various notions therefore which the catechist must impart are either percepts, concepts, or ideas. He must impart these according to the nature and the laws of the human mind, as they are taught us by psychology.

100. How to Lead the Mind to Form Percepts.—A percept is either simple or compound, external or internal. A simple percept has for its object a simple being that is not divisible, has no constituent notes, and admits of no analysis, such as light, tone, color, joy, etc. When

¹ The usual term is perception, but since that expresses the action *in fieri*, not the act *in termino*, it is less precise and correct.

the object may be divided into parts, or when it possesses various constituent notes, it is compound, as house, church, crucifix, statue. External percepts are of the external world—nature or art; internal percepts of the internal states and acts of self—thinking, feeling, willing.

The natural laws according to which percepts of sensible objects are formed are in general these: *a*) the object of which the percept is to be formed must affect our senses; *b*) we must direct our attention to the object affecting our senses, take cognizance of it, consider it; *c*) in a compound object we must analyze the aggregate of the perception into its parts, and finally reunite mentally the various parts or elements into a whole; *d*) as a simple object cannot be thus analyzed, the percept formed of it will depend solely on the force of the impression and the degree of attention.

Since children generally have already formed the simple percepts, it is not necessary to form them methodically.

The general method for forming percepts of sensible objects in the mind of the child will accordingly be: *a*) to occasion the impression on the sense of the child, and for this purpose to present the object to the sense; *b*) to lead the child by questions to take cognizance of the object and consider it; *c*) ask him to mention the various parts and combine them successively, the second with the first, the third with the second and first, finally summarize the whole and name it; *d*) mention the parts and ask the name for the whole, and reverse—name the whole object and ask for the parts.

For instance: in explaining that God is the Creator of heaven and earth, both these objects, heaven and earth, may be brought home to the mind of the child in this manner. Calling his attention to the heavens,

you will ask him: What do you see in the heavens by day? A. The sun. What do you see by night? A. The moon. What did you mention first? A. The sun. What do we see in the heavens by day? A. The sun. By night? A. The moon. What else do we see there by night? A. The stars. What do we then see all together in the heavens? A. The sun, the moon, the stars. See, child, God has made all these things, the sun, the moon, and the stars, etc.

Or pointing to the crucifix, I ask the child: "What is this?" The child will generally answer: "Jesus." Then pointing out, as before, the five sacred wounds, the crown of thorns, the drops of blood, the bowed head, I will finally summarize: "This is Jesus, nailed to the cross for us," and again ask the children to note the individual features of the crucifix.

101. Special Rules for External Percepts.—External percepts may be formed in various ways. First by presenting the object to the immediate view of the child. Whenever this is possible, it is the most natural and therefore the best method.

But since there are comparatively few objects that can be so presented in catechetical instruction, it is generally necessary to have recourse to a mediate way of presentation, by pictures, or by comparison, description, and narration.

In developing external percepts by means of pictures, the catechist should: *a*) treat the picture as if it were the object itself; for example, as above in the case of the crucifix. He should impart a clear percept of the picture, present it to the view of the child, gradually lead him to notice the individual parts, and finally let him describe it; *b*) whatever reality in the object cannot be expressed in the picture, as size, color, extension, etc., he should supply by oral explanation, and have the child

repeat this explanation also first in part and then the whole; *c*) finally the catechist combines the percept of the picture with that of the explanation given, adds the name, and questions several children on the name and object for the sake of impressing it better.

For instance: To represent to the children Noe's ark by means of a picture, he *a*) shows them a picture and leads them to notice the various parts (the three stories, the window in the front, and the door at the side).

"Here, children, is a picture of the ark which Noe built; look well at it. How many stories has it? What do you see in the front? What did you say first? What second? What do you see on the side? What three things did you notice?"

ad b) The size of the ark does not appear in the picture,—that its length was three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits; this must be told by oral explanation. "Now mind, children, this is only a picture of the ark; the ark in the picture here is very small. The real ark of Noe was very much larger. It was three hundred cubits¹ long. How long was the ark? It was fifty cubits wide. How wide? What did I say first? How long? How wide? It was thirty cubits high. How high? How long? How wide? How high?"

ad c) That which has thus been perceived by the children must be impressed on them by repeated questions—asking the name, parts, etc. "Now, children, tell me again how many stories had the ship which Noe built? What did the ship have in front? What at the side? Now pay attention. The ship which Noe built

¹ To explain the word cubit he may use a more familiar term, or compare the size of the ark with that of any large building in view, or well known to the children. (A cubit is equal to about 21 in.)

at the command of God, and which was three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high, which had a window in front and a door at the side, this ship is called the ark of Noe. Tell me now again, how did the ark of Noe look? "

This repeated questioning will impress the percept more clearly and deeply.

The catechist may use such pictures for all objects mentioned in the Old and New Testaments which he cannot present to view immediately and as they existed in reality, *v. g.*, the ark of Noe, the ark of the covenant, the temple of Jerusalem, the various animals, trees, implements, sacrifices, etc., mentioned in Scripture. Every picture, however, ought to be true, sufficiently large, and well executed (better if colored). Secondary or unimportant items should either be omitted altogether or at least not prominently exhibited. It scarcely needs to be mentioned that every picture trivial or frivolous, and, above all, every picture offending in the least against propriety, must be strictly banished from instruction.

When neither the object itself nor a picture of it is at hand, the catechist must have recourse to

Comparison of the object in question with another that is familiar to the child: for instance, the Jewish tabernacle, or the temple of Solomon with a Christian church-building. The characteristic features of the unknown object are pointed out in one or several known objects, that which still needs explanation is explained orally, and the whole is applied to the unknown object. For comparisons the catechist must select the best known, nearest, most similar objects which belong to the same species.

First, then, he will point out in the known and familiar object the qualities that are similar as well as

those that are dissimilar: the former he applies to the object under explanation, the latter he removes from it; secondly, he mentions verbally the remaining points that are peculiar to the object, and immediately questions the child concerning them.

Finally he unites the common and peculiar features, names them, asks the children to name the object when he enumerates the qualities, and to enumerate the qualities when he gives the name.

If, for example, the catechist can present no picture of the temple of Solomon, he may, though less successfully, form a percept of it by means of a comparison. The nearest object for comparison is the Catholic church building. He will call the attention of the child to the form of the church, noting how it is greater in length than in width, and of considerable height. Likewise was the temple of Solomon three times as long as it was wide: sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high. He then points out that in the fore part of the church is the main altar, the space near and around this is called the sanctuary, separated from the remaining portion of the church by several steps and a railing. In Solomon's temple also the fore part was separated from the others, not, however, by a railing, but by a curtain, which reached from the ceiling to the floor. This was called the Holy of Holies, because it contained the ark of the covenant, the symbol of the unseen God. The other part in our churches, where the faithful assist at service, was called the Holy Place in the temple. In this place was a golden candlestick, a table, and an altar upon which incense was burnt.

Further, the catechist will have the child notice that various side-chambers are connected with our churches: sacristies, oratories, chapels. Such side-chambers were

also found in Solomon's temple; it was enclosed on three sides by chambers which were built three stories high, and served to contain the sacred vessels and instruments used in the temple. Now the catechist asks the child to repeat the similarities between our churches and the temple of Solomon, and then points out what the children must dissociate from the temple, viz., the side altars, the various pictures on the walls, the pews, and what they must add instead: on the walls beautiful carvings of precious wood and ornaments of gold. At the entrance of the temple, he will finally add, was a porch, resting upon two brazen columns, and round about the temple a court in which there was an altar for the burnt offerings, and a laver, because the priest there killed and offered the victims, and prayed. Colonnades with gates separated this court of the priests from the court of the people, which again was enclosed by a wall. Now the child must give a description of Solomon's temple, pointing out the similarities and dissimilarities between it and our churches.

Description is to be made use of in catechetical instruction only when catechumens already know the various notes and parts. But since this is rarely the case, this manner of explanation is likewise to be used but rarely in instruction.

Narration is employed as a means of forming a percept of an event or fact. Very much depends here upon the proper arrangement of the narrative, the succession of the various incidents, since they are the component parts of the object, and hence of the percept, which is generally named by a brief term; for example, the sin of our first parents, the sacrifice of Abraham, etc.

(Narratives as means of forming percepts will be treated more fully further on.)

102. How to Form Internal Percepts.—The imparting of

internal percepts is of the highest importance in religious instruction. For it is the main duty of such instruction to educate the faculty of internal perception, to influence the internal sense, and to habituate the child to examine his own interior life and to test his faith, hope, and charity, his thought, affection, and desire by the truths of religion, and on the basis of a good religious, interior life to frame his exterior conduct in word and deed according to the truths of religion. Important though as this is, it is no less difficult to do, especially in the case of children who are only in the first stage of mental development, for in forming these internal percepts the soul of the child performs two functions as it were at the same time, viz., it furnishes the object of perception, and examines it, though that object is generally very transient and momentary.

The development of these internal percepts may, as in the case of the external, take place in two ways, viz., directly and indirectly.

That method is direct and immediate by which the catechist leads the child to perceive the acts and states of his own soul. For this end he must endeavor by appropriate representations to call forth in the soul of the child that mental act or that state of the soul of which the child is to form a percept. Next he must fix the attention of the child upon the internal state produced, to note the various characters and component elements, first in part and then taken together. Finally he names the whole, asks the name whilst mentioning the notes, and *vice versa*, giving the name, he asks for the notes and characteristics.

To enable the children, for instance, to form a percept of the mental act of *comparing* by the direct method, it is necessary first to have them perform that act. An appropriate object for the purpose would be any two

things in which the children may easily notice similar and dissimilar qualities, for example, two books. The two books are held up to the child to attract his attention, and he is questioned somewhat after this manner: "See here, my child, what have I in my hands? Now see whether these two books are in every way alike, or whether in some things they are not alike. Tell me first in what are they alike." By questions the catechist will direct the attention of the child to the similarities. "What are these two things which you have seen to be alike? What did you examine about these two books? Now see in what they are unlike each other. What did you examine about these two books? Of which two things did you examine in what they are alike and in what they are unlike?" Finally, "Now pay attention: to examine in what two things are alike and in what they are unlike is called—? 'To compare' means—?"

When the children have already previously perceived in a vivid manner any state of the soul of which the percept is to be formed, and if the catechist knows the time, place, and circumstance under which such perception took place, the percept may be formed by reproduction, *i. e.*, he may remind them actively of that state, and question the children on the notes of that state, *v. g.*, of joy, fear, hope, compassion, etc.

It is evident that the direct and immediate method cannot be employed for those states which it would be wrong to call forth in the child; for example, the state of envy, jealousy, anger, rash judgment, etc.

The mediate and indirect method seeks to impart internal percepts by exhibiting the *expression* of the inner state of the soul as this expression is found in living individuals or in pictures. For instance, to form a notion in children of the disposition of kindness, it may often

be practical to refer to the expressions of kindness which they receive from their parents, the kind look, the kind words, the kind tone, the considerate and sympathetic manner. Sometimes, however, this will not be feasible, as the parent may be unkind instead of kind, and the child would form a poor notion of kindness. Again, it would be a ruinous mistake to refer to the parents or superiors as types of any sin or vice.

By means of a pictorial representation the catechist may supply this defect. Showing, for example, the picture of Our Lord, the divine Friend of children, he may explain kindness by calling attention to the kind look, the act of blessing, etc., and have the children notice and repeat the various expressions of kindness seen in the picture. Finally he will call attention to the interior sentiment expressed by each of those features, name the sentiment, etc., proceeding as explained above.

Another mediate and indirect way of imparting these internal percepts is by means of comparing a certain state yet unknown or but obscurely known to the child with another similar, but familiar state in the following manner: First the catechist calls forth the percept of the familiar analogous state, and questions the child especially on those characteristics which this state has in common with the one to be explained. Then he proposes a concrete example, in which are found the characteristics of this latter state, questions first on the common attributes of both, and then on the distinctive attributes of the latter example, connects them, names the state of the soul in question, asks for the name again, enumerating the characteristics.

For instance, to form a percept of despair (of salvation), the catechist might well compare it to contrition. He might refer to the apostles Peter and Judas Iscariot as examples. He would first point out the sorrow

of Peter over his sin, his tears, etc., and by questions impress this percept. He would then point out first the similarities in the sorrow of Judas at his crime, and ascertain by questioning again the success of this part of his explanation. Next he must show the dissimilarity between both sorrows. Finally, he will summarize both the identities and differences, and questioning the pupils on the same, elicit from them the correct description of despair.

The easiest and most practical method of imparting any percept, hence also any internal percept, is by means of *narrative*; but the catechist must discriminate as well in the selection of the narrative as in its manner and catechetical treatment. As regards the selection of the narrative, he must choose only such as are complete, *i. e.*, show all the characteristics of the percept in question. Furthermore, the narrative should be easy, *i. e.*, easily understood by the children without any additional explanation, hence a narrative suited to the surroundings, the sphere, and the experience of the children. As a matter of course, the narrative must always be of a worthy character and contain nothing dangerous to morality. The *manner* of narration must be: *a*) animated, so that the children may, as it were, see and hear the event. All abstract and general terms ought, as far as possible, to be avoided, and everything individualized, and the names of persons, places, and time given, and the sayings of persons repeated in direct oration. *b*) Care must be taken not to burden the narration with secondary circumstances, and to insert that alone which suits the proximate end in question, leaving aside all that precedes or follows, or that is merely accessorial. *c*) Finally, the narration should be given with dignity and earnestness, not in a theatrical style, and correctly and accurately, as the event

really occurred, or (if the narrative is fictitious) as it might have occurred, without exaggeration, addition, or diminution.¹

As regards the *catechetical treatment* of the narrative, the children must be brought to know the narrative, and to notice and point out from its contents the characteristics of the percept to be formed. For this purpose the narrative should be repeated several times by the children, first by those who are more intelligent and speak in a louder tone. Those parts of the narrative which contain the characteristics of the percept in question must be specially noticed, and therefore repeated in a louder tone and more slowly. Next the children must be led by questions to gather the characteristic points from the narrative in parts. Finally these characteristics are to be united, the name given for the whole, and the children again questioned, first analytically, then synthetically, *i. e.*, first the characteristics are repeated by the catechist and the name asked, then the name given and the children made to repeat the characteristics. Example of filial piety: Joseph's conduct towards his father in Egypt.

103. How to Form Concepts.—A concept, as already explained, is a mental notion which is applicable to various sensible individual objects. Concepts are devel-

¹ NOTE.—It is permissible to use fictitious narratives for the purpose of imparting any percept, but they should always bear a great semblance of reality, and in their chief points be taken from daily life. The true stories from Bible History are always to be much preferred, because they possess a divine authority, lend religious dignity to the instruction, present abundant material for all important percepts, *v. g.*, for that of pride, the pharisee in the temple; ambition, the pharisees, always desiring the first place; false suspicion, Saul and Herod; envy, Cain, Joseph's brethren; magnanimity, David's conduct toward Saul; contrition, the prodigal son, etc., etc.

oped or imparted by pointing out to the pupil or by leading him to discover the common characteristics of these objects, to combine the characteristics, and to think them as a unit. A methodical development of concepts is of high importance for the education of the mind, and especially for catechetical instruction. For the catechism gives the Revelation of God, the teachings of religion in conceptual form. The catechist must therefore endeavor to formulate his instruction in the clearest and most complete concepts possible. On the other hand, he must take care not to overburden the mind of the child with concepts, much less to use the dry, abstract conceptual form exclusively in his instructions.

Conception, or the forming of concepts, is that operation of the human mind which develops concepts from inferior mental notions, especially from percepts, according to the following psychological laws: First the mind examines the various percepts, gained from the consideration of the individual objects; it discerns the notes which are common to them, and those by which they differ one from another. Secondly, it abstracts, *i. e.*, it drops from its consideration the distinctive individual characteristics. Thirdly, it reflects, *i. e.*, directs its attention to the common characteristics and consciously retains them. Fourthly, it combines them, *i. e.*, unites the common characteristics to a whole and names it as such.

In accordance with these psychological laws, the catechist in imparting a concept to the mind of the child must observe the following method. First, he must define well the concept for himself, note its characteristics (which together form the *comprehension* of the term), and then note the individual examples, objects, events, to which the concept applies and which form the *extension* of the term.

For instance: the catechist is to impart the concept *miracle*. The comprehension, better called intension of the term, is given in the definition. "A miracle is an effect which can be produced by God alone, or by him who has received the power from God." The extension of the term embraces all the individual miracles with which history acquaints us.

Having clearly before his own mind the comprehension and at least a partial extension of the concept, the catechist will first impart or recall to the mind of the child the percept of one or more examples that come under this concept. If the extension be small, he may exhaust it by enumerating all examples. The time that he has at his disposal and the ability and progress of the children will also determine the number of examples to be reviewed.

In developing the concept *miracle*, for example, the catechist may narrate some of the miracles wrought by Our Lord and by the apostles or prophets, *v. g.*, at the marriage-feast of Cana, the raising of Lazarus to life, the healing of the lame man. He should next form the percept of these individuals, or if they have been formed previously, renew them by asking such questions as: What did Our Lord do at the marriage-feast of Cana?

After each example the *common characteristics* of the concept *miracle* are at once pointed out by the catechist, and after each successive example the characteristics of those previously mentioned are recalled, and the child is led to notice that in all these examples the characteristics of the concept are to be found.

Thus after narrating or recalling to memory the act of changing water into wine, the child is led to notice the characteristic of a miracle in the act. "That was an act which God alone or one who has the power from God could do" (an effect which God alone, etc., could

produce). After the second example the same questions are repeated and the same answers elicited, and so with each subsequent example.

Now the catechist will apply summarily the characteristics of the concept to all individual examples, and thus combine them to a unit in the consciousness of the child. For example: "What kind of an act was it that Our Lord did at the marriage-feast of Cana, and in raising Lazarus to life again," etc., or, "in all these cases," etc.? "An act which God alone can do."

Finally, the catechist names the concept, asks for the name, mentioning the characteristics, and *vice versa*, and further enquires whether the individual examples are called by that name, and why.

"Now, then, children! an act which God alone can do, or he who has the power from God, is called a miracle. How is such an act called which God alone, etc.? What kind of an act is called a miracle? Is the raising of Lazarus to life a miracle? Why is it a miracle?"

104. Special Rules for the Various Species of Concepts.—By reason of their extension concepts are divided into particular and general; by reason of their comprehension into collective, negative, and relative; by reason of the object into concrete and abstract.

Particular (specific) concepts have for their source percepts; general (generic) concepts are derived from specific concepts. Hence for imparting the former, percepts are employed, for the latter, specific concepts. Thus the concept "humility" must be formed by presenting to the mind percepts, *i. e.*, examples of humility: Jesus, Mary, the publican, etc. The concept "virtue," however, is formed from the subordinate specific concepts of the various kinds of virtue: humility, charity, patience.

Collective concepts signify various similar or homogeneous objects taken as one whole, a unit under one particular aspect, or on account of one common note. They differ from distributive universals in that they indicate a unity of order, arrangement, or moral purpose, whilst the latter signify a unity of nature. Thus, many trees forming a forest, many books a library, many bishops assembled a council, are collective concepts.

The particular method of imparting these consists: *a*) in imparting or renewing the concept of the individual tree, book, bishop. Developing the concept council, for instance, it will be necessary to explain first the concept "bishop" and the purpose of the council—"discussion of grave matters of religion." *b*) The children must mediately or immediately obtain a collective percept of bishops assembled, for example, by showing a picture of a council or comparing it to any other meeting of men for serious purpose, or by a narrative of some council: Jerusalem, Nice, Trent. *c*) In every collective concept the common note must be kept in view, *v. g.*, the purpose of the assembly of bishops. *d*) The percept of the individual, the collective percept of the many and of the common note are to be repeated. *e*) Finally, all these inferior, subordinate percepts are summarized, named, questions asked, etc., as mentioned above in the general rules for concepts. For instance: "Why were the bishops assembled at Nice, Trent, etc.? Now remember: when the bishops assemble at a place to discuss grave matters of religion they hold a council. What do they hold when they assemble, etc.? At what places were such councils held? Why do you say a council was held at Nice, Trent, etc.? What is a council?"

Collective concepts which are less important do not require this methodical procedure. It is generally sufficient to use alternately the plural name of the

individuals and the collective name of the whole, *v. g.*, trees, forest, thus leading the children gradually to understand that both signify the same thing.

Negative concepts have for their object the negation of a reality. For imparting such concepts it is necessary first to impart or renew the corresponding positive concept. Then the characteristics of the negative concept are pointed out in one or several negative percepts, and the rest is governed by the general rules.

For example, if the negative concept, *mistrust in God*, were to be imparted, the catechist would begin by imparting or reviving the concept, *trust in God*. Thereupon he would narrate one or more examples from Bible History of persons guilty of mistrust, *v. g.*, Moses in the desert, and point out the characteristics of mistrust: not to expect the good from God which He can and will give us.

Relative concepts have for their object the notes which belong to two objects only in their relation to each other. Many and most important truths of religion belong to this class of concepts, which are at the same time the highest reasons for conviction, persuasion, and obligation; for instance, God, the Father of all men, the Creator, Preserver, Ruler, and Judge of the world; Jesus, the Teacher, Lawgiver, Lord, Redeemer, etc.

For the development of these concepts it is necessary, first, to impart or renew the concepts upon which the relative concept is based. Of these there are at least three: the two objects related and the quality or activity which places them in this relation. For instance, the concept *creatures* presupposes the concept God, world, and creation. The relation of the world to God in creation may best be explained by a relative percept, which shows how the objects are placed in this rela-

tion. For the relative percept of creation the catechist may simply narrate the history of creation and have the children notice that God has formed—the whole world—out of nothing—by the mere power of His will. Finally, he will point out the notes which are common to both in this relation (first singly, then combinedly), name them, etc., *v. g.*, “Who created the world? What was created by God? Because all things were created by God, they are called—? Who are creatures? Why are they called creatures?”

Abstract concepts represent qualities, conditions, and activities which cannot exist without a subject in which they inhere, but which we consider separate and distinct from their subjects, *v. g.*, meekness, humility, confidence, health, life, etc.

These concepts demand particular attention, because they are of frequent occurrence in catechisms, sermons, etc., and are difficult of acquisition. Children especially find them mostly unintelligible, and must be spared the use of these abstract terms until a later period, when they will find such terms easy in proportion to the care and success of previous training.

These concepts are developed by separating the quality, condition, or activity from the subject in which it inheres, and proposing it as if it existed in and by itself. For this purpose the catechist must first impart or renew the concrete concept which is the basis of the abstract; *v. g.*, proud, humble, envious, etc. Secondly, the children are led to predicate something of the subject, with which the quality, condition, attribute is connected in the form of an adjective, participle, or adjunct, *v. g.*, “Who was displeased with the proud Pharisee? Why was God displeased with the Pharisee?” Next the form of the sentence is so changed as to make the adjective, etc., the subject of

the sentence, whilst that in which it inheres is made less prominent, *v. g.*, by the use of the genitive: "His being proud displeased God." The same process may be employed with various examples: "The *proud* angels were displeasing to God." "The angels' being proud was displeasing to God." Finally, the abstract term is substituted for the concrete, and the catechist may oftentimes point out in particular that the one may be used for the other.

Often it is unnecessary, and frequently too it is impossible to develop all abstract concepts thus methodically. Generally it is sufficient to pass from the use of the concrete term to the abstract, using both at first indiscriminately, as in the case of collective terms.

Smaller children often find it difficult to define the abstract in an abstract manner, and it is better to give the question a concrete form; *v. g.*, "What does that mean—to be humble?" instead of asking: "What is humility?"

105. How to Impart Ideas.—Ideas are notions of the super-sensible, the divine, the absolute. They are a necessary element of catechetical instruction, as they form the most important element of Christian doctrine, the highest reasons of obligation and persuasion to practise Christian morality, as the ideas, *v. g.*, of the divine attributes, grace, judgment, heaven, immortality, etc. Religious ideas are based upon disconnected sentences of Revelation, which, moreover, are easily misinterpreted, and this is a further reason for care and accuracy in imparting these ideas. The mind of the child is either entirely barren of such ideas as yet, or it has received the few that it does possess in an incomplete or incorrect manner.

To impart these ideas to others the catechist must first himself have an accurate and distinct notion of them, framed according to the teaching of Christ and His

Church. The method of imparting them will be by way of analogy. The catechist selects an analogous, sensuous percept, and either imparts or renews it in the mind of the child, *v. g.*, the knowledge of men to explain the omniscience of God. He then extends the analogous percept by showing that it is capable of increase, at the same time pointing out the limits of earthly things; *v. g.*, showing the superiority of the knowledge of one man over that of another, and mentioning things that are beyond the knowledge of any man. He then points out some source of cognition from which is evident the existence of a knowledge that is not confined within limits, for example, *the text of Holy Scripture* in witness of God's omniscience. "The eyes of the Lord are far brighter than the sun, beholding round about all the ways of men, and the bottom of the deep, and looking into the hearts of men into the most secret parts, for all things were known to the Lord God before they were created; so also after they were perfected He beholdeth all things." (Ecclus. xxiii. 28, 29.) Finally, combining the various characteristics of the idea, he asks for the name, and mentioning the name he asks the child the characteristics, according to the general rules given above.

Another method, less elaborate and very well suited both to the positive character of revealed religion and the mental capacity of the child, is to narrate a biblical event and develop from it the corresponding idea. For instance, the idea of God's omnipotence from the narrative of creation, the mercy of God from the history of the Prodigal, etc. Analogous sensuous concepts may well be employed for illustrating the contrary.

To develop, for example, the idea of the omnipresence of God, the catechist might proceed somewhat after the following manner: To develop the analogous

sensuous concept he might ask the child: "Where are you now? Where were you when you heard Mass this morning? Where were you when you said your morning prayers? Now, can you be at the same time at school, at church, and at home? In how many places can you be at one and the same time? Now let us see in how many places can God be at the same time. The Holy Bible tells us that the Lord says: 'Do I not fill heaven and earth?' What does the Holy Bible say? Now pay attention. 'God fills heaven and earth' means God is present in heaven, on earth, in all places. What do the words mean: 'God fills heaven and earth'? In how many places is God present? Now pay attention again: God is present in all places at the same time, *i. e.*, God is omnipresent. How do we say in one word: 'God is present everywhere, in all places, at the same time'? What does that mean: God is omnipresent? Who tells us that God is omnipresent? What does the Holy Bible say? What do these words mean?"

ART. III.

METHOD OF CATECHETICAL EXPLANATION.

106. Various Methods and Means of Explanation.—The rules for a clear explanation of religious truths have already been given in general Homiletics (third chapter), and it is necessary only to add a few special suggestions for catechetical explanation.

For the smaller children in the lower classes the simplest explanation is sufficient—the verbal explanation, by synonyms, circumlocution, and comparison. The catechist must endeavor to impress on the minds of these children one or the other correct characteristic, so that they will be able to distinguish the particular notion from others, even though these notions remain

as yet incomplete and less precise. In the course of the instruction, however, these notions must develop in distinctness and completeness. The logical explanation by definition must be reserved for the higher classes. Even there it is not always necessary, and a rhetorical explanation is sometimes preferable or advisable in connection with the logical definition. The explanation by contraries and illustration, by examples and similes, is very useful in catechetical instruction.

In explaining by contraries the catechist must: *a*) briefly develop or recall the contrary notion and mention it as a contrary. If, for example, the term "Christian" is to be explained by its contrary, the catechist, after briefly developing or recalling the idea of a "Christian" asks, "Is the Jew or the heathen also a Christian?" *b*) After the children have answered correctly, he asks them for the reason why the notion referred to is contrary to the first and incompatible with it, *v. g.*, "Why do you say that the Jew or the heathen is not a Christian?" *c*) If the children are unable to give the reason, the catechist asks them to recount the characteristics of the one idea as well as of the other, and directs the children to notice that the characteristics of the one are not to be found in the other, thus leading them to discover the reason. For instance: "Who is a Christian? Whose teaching does the Christian accept? In whose name is the Christian baptized? Is the Jew baptized in the name of Christ? Does he accept the teaching of Christ? Is he, then, a Christian? Why is he not a Christian?"

The simplest method of employing the contrary after developing or renewing the idea is to omit one of its characteristics, and ask whether you may still give it the same name, and why not? For example: "Who is a Christian? Is he who has accepted the teaching

of Christ, but has not yet been baptized in the name of Christ, a Christian?"

When examples are used for explanation or illustration of notions already formed, the catechist *a*) mentions or asks the children to mention an apt example, *v. g.*, for the concept "to be obedient" he may ask: "Can you mention an example of an obedient boy?" If they fail to remember any, he may assist them: "What was the name of the boy who served the high-priest Heli?" *b*) He then asks whether the example suits the notion of "being obedient" or not, and *why*; *v. g.*, "How was Samuel towards Heli? Why do you say Samuel was obedient towards Heli?" *c*) If the children cannot give the reason, the catechist asks them to repeat the definition of the concept "obedience," and prompts them by questions to trace its characteristics in the example mentioned, as in the above. "Who is obedient? Well, now, what does the Holy Bible tell us of the boy Samuel in the temple?" The catechist will direct particular attention to the promptness, cheerfulness, and perseverance of Samuel's obedience by such questions as: "How often did Samuel obey Heli? Did he obey at once? Did he do exactly what he was told to do? Who obeyed always and promptly and with exactness? How is he called who obeys always and at once?" etc. "What was Samuel when he so obeyed Heli? Why do you say Samuel was obedient?"

In employing similes the catechist must *a*) develop distinctly and accurately that truth which is to be thus illustrated. Example: In the simile, "Jesus is the light of the world," the truth: Jesus illumines by His teaching the mind of man, and kindles in his heart the flame of divine love. *b*) He then calls attention to the object of the simile, and asks for the characteristics common to it and the idea to be illustrated, *v. g.*,

“What shines in the heavens in day-time? What lights up the earth? What gives warmth to the earth? What lights and warms the world?” *c)* Now he points out the similarity between both, and explains it, *v. g.*, as the sun lights and warms the earth, so Jesus enlightens the minds of men and inflames their hearts with the love of God. *d)* Finally, the children point out the common characteristics, first in one, then in the other, singly and combinedly, and finally the catechist asks of what the image (the sun) should remind us.

CHAPTER V.

CATECHETICAL ARGUMENTATION.

ART. I.

CATECHETICAL ARGUMENTATION IN GENERAL.

107. Necessity. Cautions. - The end of catechetical instruction must be to impart not only correct and clear notions of religious truth, but likewise a firm and lasting conviction of its objective reality. This obliges the catechumen to give, in a simple and intelligible manner, the reasons and proofs for the religious truth imparted and explained, in order thus to produce such a conviction. It may perhaps be objected that argumentation should not enter into catechetical instruction, but that the authority of the instructor should be sufficient to convince the child. It is true, this authority is always necessary, and with smaller children must supplant all reasoning; but it will not suffice in every case, especially not for larger children, and in cases where this conviction has from some cause or other been shaken. The truths of religion are too important to be based upon so fragile and uncertain a support as is the authority of the teacher.

It would therefore be a serious mistake to let children grow up without furnishing them any arguments in support of their religious convictions. On the other hand, it would be equally injudicious to burden the

mind of the child with too much argument, or to introduce into catechetical instruction the reasoning of scientific theology.

The catechist should therefore observe the following rules with regard to the demonstration of religious truth to children: *a)* He should not make it his business to demonstrate everything in religion, or employ arguments that are very difficult of comprehension, or too many of them. In questioning the child he should not use too frequently such expressions as: "Can you prove?" or "Prove to me," which may give rise to a critical and disputatious spirit. *b)* He must not look upon religious conviction as an affair of the natural intellectual powers alone, but as a result likewise of divine grace and free will. *c)* He must above all endeavor to instil into the hearts of children a great reverence and love for God and His revelation; for His holy Church, infallible and guided as she is by the Holy Spirit; for truth in general and religious truth in particular; for his own person and his clerical state. He must therefore ever show himself a true representative of Jesus Christ, the divine Friend of children, paternal, affable, and must be constantly on his guard against giving rise, by word or action, to the slightest suspicion that any part of his instruction may be untrue, or that he himself may not be firmly convinced of his teaching.

108. General Rules.—The arguments for the truths of religion are in the main the same for children as for adults. The method of argumentation especially adapted for children must be guided by the following general rules:

1. The various notions which form the matter of the doctrinal sentence (subject and predicate) should, as a rule, be first developed, recalling them by questions concerning their characteristic notes, by examples, con-

traries, etc. When the notions are very familiar, however, this is not necessary. The predicate, being the more universal term, is generally developed first, *v. g.*, "The soul of man is immortal." "What does that mean—the soul of man is immortal?" 2. Then the reason for believing this truth is pointed out, *v. g.*, "How do we know this?" or "What does the Holy Bible tell us about this truth?" 3. This reason must then be made clear to the pupil, so that he may see its connection with the truth in question, and he must be led to infer the truth from the reason given. To this end the catechist may ask for the predicate by mentioning the subject, or *vice versa*, introducing at the same time in the form of a causal clause the reason for the teaching, *v. g.*, "What does Our Lord say of the soul of man? What does Our Lord say is immortal?" 4. Finally, the sentence is repeated, its meaning and its reason again asked, *v. g.*, "What is the soul? What does that mean: 'The soul of man is immortal?' How do we know that the soul of man is immortal? What does Our Lord say?" If there are several arguments to be given for the truth, each is developed in the same manner, introducing it by such words as: "Let us see from what other source we learn this also." Finally, the arguments given are to be repeated by the children, answering the question: Whence do we know this 1, 2, 3? etc. The catechist should make it a practice first to read the sentence from the catechism, or have it read by the children, then to proceed as above, and ultimately to return to the words of the catechism. Compound and complex sentences should be divided into their component parts, and each part treated by itself. In the end the whole sentence is to be repeated in its entire form, *v. g.*, "Mortal sin deprives us of spiritual life, which is sanctifying grace, and brings everlasting death and damnation on the soul."

Analyzed: Sanctifying grace is the life of the soul,—mortal sin deprives us of this life; mortal sin brings everlasting death.

ART. II.

CATECHETICAL ARGUMENTATION IN PARTICULAR.

109. Arguments from Revelation take precedence of all others from the positive character of Christian religious instruction.

After explaining, if necessary, the terms of the proposition, 1) the scriptural text used as proof is repeated, as a rule, verbatim, and in direct, not indirect oration. The argumentative force of a scriptural text frequently depends on the explicit words. Moreover, in this manner the children become acquainted with the language of the Scripture, *v. g.*, not, "Jesus said that we shall be saved by believing in Him," but "Jesus said: 'Amen, Amen I say unto you, He that believeth in Me hath everlasting life.'" It is not always necessary to cite chapter and verse; it is of great utility, however, to quote the text, not merely in a general way, but with mention of the circumstances of time, place, persons, etc. This will greatly assist the memory of the children, *v. g.*, "Jesus said to Nicodemus," or "At the last supper," or "On the Mount of Olives before His ascension into heaven, Jesus said to His apostles." Difficult passages should be repeated several times by the catechist or by the children. 2) Passages that are difficult to understand must be explained either by giving directly the meaning of the text, or leading the children on to it by means of appropriate questions. The explanation may be made in various ways: *a)* by a grammatical analysis of the text, emphasizing the argumentative part; at the same time the catechist men-

tions whether the sentence expresses a judgment, a narration, a prophecy, a request, an admonition, a command, a desire, a question, or an answer; *b*) by changing the construction, giving a simpler construction in place of the more complicated, the ordinary form of speech instead of the figurative, the entire sentence for an abbreviation, the concrete for the abstract, the noun for the pronoun, the object compared instead of the image, etc.; *c*) by carrying out similes that occur, *v. g.*, "Behold the lamb of God." In doing this the necessary archæological remarks should be premised; *d*) by methodically developing and asking the characteristic notes of the various notions occurring in the text. 3) After this the proposition must be again asked, introducing the scriptural text as causal clause, *v. g.*, "because the Holy Bible says," etc. The text may be repeated entire or in its main argumentative part, verbatim or in its sense, or may be simply referred to by "therefore," "hence," etc. 4) As usual, the proposition, its explanation, the scriptural text, its meaning and connection with the proposition, must be asked.

For instance: "Jesus gave His apostles the same power which He Himself had received from His heavenly Father." Here the notion "to possess power" must generally be first imparted or renewed by questions such as: "Who possesses power?" etc. *ad 1*) "After His Resurrection, on Easter Sunday, Jesus appeared to His apostles and said to them: 'As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you.'" "To whom did Jesus appear after His Resurrection? What did He say to His apostles?" *ad 2*) Now mind: these words mean "the same power which My Father has given to Me, I also give to you." "What do these words mean?" *ad 3*) "To whom did Jesus give power, when He said to His apostles?" etc. "What power did He give to His apostles?" *ad 4*) "Tell me, again, who gave His apostles the same power which?" etc. "What does that mean: Jesus gave His apostles power? Whence do we know that Jesus gave this power to?" etc. "What does the Holy Bible say? What do these words mean?"

NOTE.—In arguments from Tradition the same method is to be

observed, and care should be taken always to mention expressly the holy Church, who teaches us thus through tradition. Likewise in arguments from Scripture, it is very advisable to refer to this by such questions as: "What does the holy Church teach us through the Bible?"

110. A moderate use of *proofs from reason*, besides those from *revelation*, is justified in catechetical instruction even from a pedagogical standpoint. The children are to become accustomed gradually to employ properly their reasoning faculties. A good and proper use of reason will prevent the abuse of this noble faculty. But these arguments must be presented in the easiest and most intelligible form possible.

Argumentation is the deduction of one truth from another which is more generally known. This argumentation or reasoning will be intelligible for children when they are able readily to perceive the connection between the one truth and the other. For this reason the catechist should invariably use the complete and regular form of reasoning, especially the categorical general form for the conclusion, and employ the following method in his reasoning:

a) He should form the syllogism, the conclusion of which is the truth to be proven; *v. g.*, if the truth in question is this: "We must be grateful to our parents," the syllogism will be as follows: "We must be grateful to our benefactors; our parents are our benefactors, therefore," etc. b) He explains the terms of the conclusion, *v. g.*, "What does that mean: 'To be grateful'?" c) He will treat the major (first) premise as if it stood alone. If the proposition is not certain, it must first be proven. The catechist should emphasize the universality of the proposition, laying special stress upon the "all," "every one," or "no one," *v. g.*, "Who is a benefactor? How should we act towards

our benefactors? Towards how many benefactors should we be grateful?" *d*) The minor premise must likewise be treated by itself. It is to be remarked that this proposition contains no new idea, and all that is necessary is to show the subordination of the subject under the predicate, which may be easily done by analyzing the predicate into its characteristic notes, *v. g.*, "Your parents are your benefactors. Who gives the children food? Is food a good gift? Who gives the children clothing? Is clothing good for the children? Who then gives the children many good things? How do we call him who gives us many good gifts, who does us much good? And how do we call parents, because they give the children many good gifts? Why do you say 'the parents are your benefactors'?" *e*) After developing both premises in this manner, the children repeat the premises several times in order to retain them connectedly, *v. g.*, "How should we act towards all our benefactors? What are the parents for the children? Now pay attention! Who can repeat these two sentences: We must be grateful to all our benefactors: the parents are our benefactors?" *f*) Next the children are led to draw the conclusion themselves, by formulating the question in such a manner that the premises are inserted as causal clauses, *v. g.*, "We must be grateful to all our benefactors, and, Our parents are our benefactors. To whom must we therefore be grateful?" "Since we must be grateful to all our benefactors, and the parents are our benefactors, what must we be towards our parents?" *g*) Finally the conclusion is repeated and explained, then the reason asked, which is found in the minor premise, and lastly the major also repeated, *v. g.*, "So then we must be grateful to our parents. What does that mean, 'We must be grateful to our parents'? Why must we be grateful to our par-

ents? and how must we be towards all our benefactors?" Thus the analysis will appear the exact reverse of the synthesis.

III. Arguments from History, Experience, and Authority.—According as the facts derived from history or experience are subordinate or co-ordinate to the proposition in question, the proofs will be taken either from induction or analogy. The catechetical method with regard to arguments from induction is as follows: *a*) As usual the terms of the proposition are to be explained, *v. g.*, "Jesus worked miracles." "What is a miracle?" *b*) After that, one or several facts from history or experience are narrated, or the children are reminded of them. After narrating the first fact the children are asked to mention the characteristics common to all; likewise after the second and third fact. The subsequent facts are connected with the first, the common characteristic briefly pointed out in all, and finally summarily repeated; for example: "Let us see what Bible History tells us. Who changed water into wine at the marriage-feast of Cana? What did Jesus do? What did Jesus do in the desert with five loaves and two fishes? What did He perform then? What did He do at Cana and in the desert? Who worked a miracle in both these places?" *c*) Now the children are asked for the proposition, the catechist merely referring to the facts narrated, *v. g.*, "What, then, did Jesus often do?" *d*) The proposition is repeated and the synthetical method employed as usual, *v. g.*, "Who worked miracles? What does that mean: 'Jesus worked miracles'? How do we know this? What miracles does Bible History relate to us?" etc., etc.

The catechetical method in arguments from analogy is very similar. After *a*) explaining the terms, imparting or renewing the notions expressed by the proposi-

tion, *b*) the characteristics in question are pointed out in the analogous cases, *c*) the proposition is asked, introducing the analogy of both the case in argument and that to be proven as a causal sentence, *d*) as above.

Example: God still punishes disobedient children. *a*) "Who is disobedient? How was Absalom towards his father? How were the sons of Heli towards their father? What children are like Absalom and the sons of Heli? How did God punish Absalom? How did He punish the sons of Heli? Why did God punish Absalom and the sons of Heli? *b*) What will God do even now to the children who are disobedient like Absalom and the sons of Heli? *c*) Who will still punish disobedient children? How do we know this?"

As arguments from authority we may use, in the case of children, the sayings of parents, teachers, and other esteemed persons, worthy of belief and confidence. The general opinion also of men, expressed in maxims and proverbs, may be used as such an argument. However, it should not be employed by itself as the only argument, except in unimportant matters, and in passing, and only with small children.

ART. III.

CATECHETICAL REFUTATION.

112. With smaller children a special refutation of existing prejudice or doubt against the truths of our holy religion will scarcely ever be necessary. The catechist must rather be on his guard not to occasion doubt or false judgment by his own action. For this reason he must be careful never to propose the teachings of religion in a doubting manner, but positively and with the tone of certainty. He must never himself raise a doubt against the doctrine or call the attention of the children to such, or raise such questions as would bear even a semblance of doubt or error. Such expressions, therefore,

as, "How can that be, that God is present everywhere? I don't see Him," etc., should never be used. He should never speak of the saints in a trivial manner. He must endeavor to conform his own life to the doctrine he explains, since a contrast between the two would prove the greatest impediment to faith for the catechumen. If doubts have already arisen in the mind of the child (which is possible with us on account of the early infidel associations of many children), the catechist to remove them should follow the example of St. Augustine : *a*) representing the doctrine as revealed; *b*) tracing back the incomprehensible character of the mystery to the omnipotence of God; *c*) showing the glorification of God's attributes by the mystery and the practical influence of the doctrine.

Although doubt or error will rarely be found actually existing in the mind of the young catechumen, the catechist must preserve the child against possible impressions of evil teaching and example and of false principles, with which he may have already or very probably will become acquainted in the future. Great caution, however, is to be exercised in this, so as to avoid making the child too familiar with the opinions and pretexts of irreligious men, as well as leaving him in entire ignorance thereof. The children must learn to know that there exist evil doctrines in the world, which they are not to consider, but to reject as soon as they find them opposed to the doctrine they have learned, and that they must never follow an example that is opposed to this doctrine. On the other hand, they must not become so far initiated into evil as to be allured by it.

The principles of catechetical refutation (referring back to what has already been said in general Homi-

¹ De Catech. Rud., c. i., q. 5.

letics) may be reduced to the following points: *a*) The very small children must be simply taught how they are to live acceptable to God, and how such or such conduct would render them displeasing to Him. *b*) The more advanced must receive some instruction concerning prevalent false doctrines, the catechist opposing to these the truths revealed by God, but the less common errors, etc., should not be mentioned. *c*) Children who have completed their school term, as well as adults, must be told distinctly that they will meet with evil persons and influences. But first they must be imbued thoroughly with the true principles, etc., of revealed doctrine, and learn to know this in all its grandeur, beauty, and salutary effects, and then only should opposite teachings of evil men be laid bare to them in all their hideous and pernicious character. These youths must likewise be warned against bad examples, but even such warning should be given only after thorough discussion of a good and virtuous life with reference to good examples. Refutation should always be presented in such a way that children conceive a hatred against sin, but never against sinful men, and never become inflated with pride at their own virtue.

CHAPTER VI.

INFLUENCE UPON THE HEART AND WILL OF THE CATECHUMEN.

ART. I.

INFLUENCE UPON THE HEART.

113. *Unction Required in Catechetical Instruction.*—Catechetical instruction should influence not only the mind, but likewise the heart of the catechumen, and excite holy affections in him. Especially that highest and noblest of all affections, a holy love for God and their neighbor, should be cultivated by the catechist in the innocent hearts of children, the very best soil for this holy fruit. St. Augustine¹ says: the catechist should propose to himself love as his highest end, and everything he says should bear direct reference to it, so that “the catechumens may learn to believe from hearing, to hope from faith, to love from hope.” Since love is produced by love, all catechetical instruction should tend to make plain and palpable how much God loves man, and how acceptable and pleasing to Him is the love we have for one another. Every truth of the catechism therefore should be represented in such a manner that it portrays the love of God for us, and that the catechumens, according to the meas-

¹ De Catech. Rud., c. iv.

ure of their capacity, conceive a love for God, and for their neighbor for the sake of God. Even the doctrine of divine retributive justice must be explained in such a manner that the love of God is manifested thereby, and that the effect be not a servile, but a loving fear of the God who threatens, punishes, and pardons out of love. In the chapter on the divine commandments every commandment must be traced back to love, and every transgression of a commandment must be represented as an offence against charity.

In the more advanced classes, and especially in the case of adults, it is advisable to give a collective view of the individual manifestations of God's love for us, recorded in Revelation, in order to confirm and increase the love for God. For instance, the doctrine "God is merciful" may be shown in the promises of a Redeemer; the long-suffering patience of God before punishing sinful man at the time of Noe; in the history of the Israelites; the examples of His readiness to pardon, as in the case of David; the loving forgiveness of Jesus towards various sinners, the penitent thief on the cross; His death on the cross; the institution of the sacraments of Baptism and Penance, etc. This will prove a most efficacious means of exciting love, contrition, and penance in the heart of the catechumen.

Besides this divine charity, the catechist must cultivate in the hearts of his charges the religious-moral feelings, which indeed stand in closest relation to charity. Beginning with the smallest, he must endeavor, as often as occasion permits, to cultivate in them the feeling of a joyful remembrance of God, the attendance at divine service, and purity of conscience before God. With the classes of boys and girls approaching riper age, he must among other affections implant especially that of detestation of all impure, degrading pleasures, and

cherish in opposition to them the esteem and love for purity and virginity, which secure true tranquillity of mind and heart. In his instruction of youths in church, where adults are likewise present, he must ever seek to imbue his hearers with a hatred for sensual pleasure, and with love for the joys of true piety and a desire for eternal and heavenly pleasures.

ART. II.

INFLUENCE UPON THE WILL OF THE CATECHUMEN.

114. Efficacy of Catechetical Instruction.—The catechist must constantly endeavor to lead his catechumen to conform his own will to the will of God, and thus to sanctify it. For this purpose he must imbue the catechumen with a lively perception and deep sentiment of his entire dependence upon God, and of the indispensable necessity of carrying out the divine will. He must convince the catechumen, moreover, that this conformity to the will of God constitutes the true dignity of man and the only means of salvation. He must for this end, in the course of catechetical instruction, act as the interpreter of the divine Law, as it is expressed in the commandments of God and of the Church, in the example of Jesus Christ, in the dictates of conscience, etc. The motives, examples, and means which he proposes for the fulfilment of this divine Law must be suited to the capacity and needs of the children, so that they will be led to embrace it cheerfully and lovingly, and learn to submit their will habitually and perseveringly to the divine will.

With regard to the motives, the catechist should observe the principle of St. Augustine,¹ that the law will

¹ De Catech. Rud., c. xxii.

be observed if the motive is not a desire of earthly remuneration, but love for Him who has given the law. A methodical representation of the *natural* advantages consequent upon the fulfilment of the law will be insufficient to overcome the evil inclinations against the law, and will have the effect only of cultivating selfish motives, of undermining true morality in the heart of the child, and leading it away from God on to mean egotism. The pure and innocent heart of the child is most easily moved by the consideration, "God loves me." Therefore this pure and holy love of God must be employed in catechetical instruction as the principal motive, and the child must be induced to do good and to avoid evil because God wills it, because he thereby renders himself acceptable to God, and secures the greater love of God in return.

With regard to employing examples for the purpose of sanctifying the will of the catechumen, the catechist will do well to select individual characters, especially from Bible history, and with the aid of these to develop the moral judgment of children. He should therefore occasionally narrate individual acts or occurrences in a simple and easy style, and direct the children to refer the external action and the interior disposition to the law of God, and measure and judge the action and disposition accordingly. Especial stress must be laid on the *motive* of the acts. Those examples which the children can and should imitate ought to be most generally employed, and the application always made to the condition and circumstances of the children. For example, the obedience of Jacob, the purity, fear of God, filial love, and fraternal charity of Joseph, the virtues of the elder and the younger Tobias, etc., likewise the lives of the saints, especially of the martyrs, the usual patron saints, etc. The imitative inclination, which is

especially prominent in children, will thus be developed in its noblest form, and by an early acquaintance with the martyrs and other saints the youthful heart is wonderfully steeled against the seductive examples and teachings of the world. Thus the examples of the saints, Agnes, Pancratius, the seven sons of St. Felicitas, Aloysius, Stanislaus, and other holy youths present the most natural occasion to inculcate fortitude against the allurements of evil teaching and example, and to accustom the children to keep their eyes fixed on God and His holy Law, and to strengthen their resolve never to depart from the path of religion and virtue. The examples chosen ought always to be authentic, and those actions especially proposed which the catechumens may imitate, *v. g.*, devotion in prayer, charity to the poor, worthy reception of the holy sacraments, forgiveness of injuries, purity of conscience, the shunning of evil and dangerous occasions, etc. The method used in such narration and moral instruction should generally be that of continued discourse, although for the sake of recapitulation the Socratic method may be profitably employed.

CHAPTER VII.

CATECHETICAL LANGUAGE.—MODES OF CATECHETICAL ADDRESS.

ART. I.

CATECHETICAL LANGUAGE.

115. Peculiarities of Juvenile Language.—Language is the principal means of communicating our ideas to others. Language, however, becomes the medium of ideas only for those by whom it is understood. Hence it follows that the language of the catechist will be of value to the catechumens only in so far as it is understood by them. Hence, again, the catechist must employ a language and style suited to their capacity and linguistic attainments—in other words, he must accommodate himself to the language of the children. On the other hand, religious instruction must employ those terms which the Bible and the Church employ—a fact that necessitates the education and development of the language of the children to that extent that they are enabled to understand the customary religious terms.

The store of juvenile expressions is more or less limited according to local circumstances (city or country), and according to the facilities of conversation that are presented to children by their surroundings. The classes of words they employ are likewise different from those of adults. Children as a rule express

ideas by their sensible appearance, or by those external qualities that are most conspicuous for them, *v. g.*, instead of "being ashamed" they will say "to blush, grow red;" instead of "showing enmity"—"not to speak with another."

Children are wont to use specific instead of generic terms, *v. g.*, "Aloysius prays, obeys, learns cheerfully," instead of "is good;" "Benjamin, Ruben, Levi," instead of "the brethren." Instead of the word expressing negation, they prefer the positive term, prefixing "not;" *v. g.*, instead of "idle"—"not diligent," instead of "useless"—"of no use." Instead of a collective term, smaller children use the plural number with the individual object, *v. g.*, "soldiers," or "many soldiers," instead of "army." Abstract terms are almost entirely unknown to them, and when used, they are used by them with the infinitive, *v. g.*, "to be strong," for "strength." Among the nouns they prefer the diminutives, whilst in place of derivative verbs and adverbs they substitute the circumscription, *v. g.*, instead of "magnify"—"to make larger." They nearly always speak in the indicative mood.

Indirect oration is foreign to them; they give the words of the person direct, mentioning expressly circumstances of time, place, etc.

These general observations dictate the following rules for the catechist: *a*) He must as far as possible use words that are familiar to the children, and if he employs an unknown word, or a word in a sense that is unusual to the children, he must take care to define it distinctly. *b*) In place of words which express interior conditions and activity, he will do better to select such forms as are expressive of the exterior appearance or manifestation of these interior dispositions. *c*) Words that express general, abstract ideas, must be replaced by the component parts of these ideas, and by concrete

terms, *v. g.*, instead of "all creatures"—"everything that God has created;" instead of "God rewarded Abraham's obedience"—"because Abraham was obedient, God rewarded him." *d*) By mentioning the circumstances of time, place, etc., introducing persons as speaking and acting, he must render his style animated and clear to the children.

In order to acquire facility in this mode of expression, the catechist must *a*) observe the peculiarities of juvenile language; *b*) read well-written juvenile books, magazines, etc.; *c*) converse frequently with children; *d*) make an especial practice of transcribing from an elevated style to a simple, juvenile mode of expression, carefully prepare his instruction, observe and find out by questions whether he has been understood by all, and correct his mistakes and faults.

116. The Language of Religion and of the Church.—The terms and phrases which the inspired writers, the holy fathers, and the teachers of Christian truth have invented or employed to designate exclusively religious truth, constitute the religious and ecclesiastical language. The catechumens must necessarily be made familiar with these terms, as they occur in catechisms, in books of instruction and devotion, in sermons, etc. The catechist must therefore explain these terms as they occur, taking into consideration their origin and peculiarities. For example, many of these expressions are borrowed from Oriental languages, *v. g.*, mammon, Messias, alleluja. Others have been coined by the Church to designate certain mysteries, *v. g.*, Trinity, Sacrament, Divine Person, etc. Many terms are explained by history, former customs and practices, circumstances of time and place, etc., *v. g.*, Easter, Pentecost, keys of heaven, etc. Most of them are figurative, as "daily bread, Light of the world."

This difference of origin points out the various ex-

planations necessary. In explaining terms derived from Oriental languages, or introduced by the Church, the truth in question must be *a*) explained and then the term given for it; if possible, the corresponding term from the mother-tongue should be added; *v. g.*, after saying that many doctrines of Christ were preached by the apostles, ~~but~~ not written, the catechist immediately adds that these doctrines form the divine tradition or the unwritten word of God. *b*) When the expressions have their origin in history, in former customs and practices, the necessary archæological explanations should be briefly premised, so that the catechumens may comprehend the meaning of the expression and retain it. *c*) In metaphorical expressions the image or figure whence the expression is derived must first be explained.

In this country a peculiar difficulty presents itself to the catechist in the case of children of foreign-born parents. Such children, as a rule, learn their prayers and receive their first instructions at home in their mother-tongue, whilst their outside associations are mostly English. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, as already quoted, recommends that religious instruction be given these children both in English and in their mother-tongue. Wherever this is not carried out or may not be practicable, the catechist may find frequent occasion to use both languages in particular instances in the course of his instruction. He may illustrate the term in one language by the corresponding term in the other language, and thus turn the disadvantage into a decided advantage. It will, beyond dispute, always be advisable to mention the English term along with the other, at least in the more important and fundamental doctrines, since these children may, as the Council observes, at a future time be placed in circumstances

where entire nescience of English religious terms would entail serious disadvantages. Above all, the catechist must never forget that the language is a medium merely of communicating ideas, and that the medium must be suited to the end, not *vice versa*. The end of all instruction is to draw children to Christ, and it would be nothing short of a crime to let national or linguistic prejudices bar the way of the child to Christ, who recognizes "no distinction of the Jew and the Greek, but is the same Lord and Saviour over all." In this respect no less than in others, the catechist must become "all for all in order to gain all for Christ."

ART. II.

CATECHETICAL DELIVERY.

117. Modes of Catechetical Address in Explanation.—The mode and method of addressing the child in catechetical instruction will determine to a great extent his co-operation and individual activity by securing his attention, and thus making sure that he will understand and remember the subject. We may consider this method with a view to the explanation, and, secondly, with a view to impressing and inculcating the subject.

The two principal methods of instruction are the method of continuous discourse and the method of dialogue between the teacher and pupil. Neither of these methods should be employed exclusively.

The method of continuous discourse is that of communication, of making known something hitherto unknown to the hearer. This method is necessary when a positive truth is to be communicated which cannot be learned by mere natural activity of the intellect, *v. g.*, Bible History, Revealed Doctrine. These truths ought to bear the character of revelation, even in the form

and method in which they are communicated. The method of continuous discourse is peculiarly adapted to impress the will and the affections of the children by means of short addresses, exhortations, etc. Moreover, it is adapted to children of riper age, and hence, as the class advances, may be more generally used. In the Sunday instruction of youths, this method may be used almost exclusively, questions being asked briefly only in the beginning or at the end.

This method is not applicable to younger children, whose minds are giddy, and incapable of that continued strain which is necessary to follow a lengthy discourse. Furthermore the catechist must, in the case of these children, satisfy himself, step by step, that he has been understood, and if not, remedy the defect. Again he must, immediately upon each explanation, impress it upon the memory of the child by repetition and questions.

The method of dialogue is again twofold. One method consists merely in asking questions on what has been learned; the other in asking questions for the purpose of imparting instruction, commonly called the Socratic method. The former method serves to sustain the mental activity of the children, and to ascertain whether they have been paying attention, and have understood and retained the words and their meaning. In case the children are found deficient or delinquent, the matter is again explained, and those that have been inattentive are incited to attention. Moreover, by means of such questioning the whole subject is again reviewed, until all, or very nearly all, have understood it, and the instruction can be continued with profit. With smaller children especially, every sentence, every doctrine, every reading from Bible history or from the catechism, every explanation given thereon, ought to

be carefully and diligently, even repeatedly, reviewed by questions.

The manner of asking questions may again be either mechanical, or grammatical, or logical. In the first case the question is merely asked and the answer repeated verbatim without any attempt at ascertaining whether the matter has been comprehended or not. The grammatical method analyzes the sentence in questioning, in order to render the whole clearer by emphasizing the various parts. It does not, however, enter into an explanation or correction of the idea, or aim to influence the mind or heart. Though it is superior to the merely mechanical method, it by no means equals the logical method. For the grammatical relation of the various parts of a sentence may be well understood, without any idea of the meaning, reason, and application of a doctrine.

The Socratic method is mainly suggestive, and aims by means of questions to lead the mind of the pupil to infer and discover for itself new truths from those already known. This method keeps the mind of the pupil constantly employed, excludes all merely mechanical recitation, and rouses, practises, and sharpens the intellect and judgment of the child. It requires, however, great skill on the part of the teacher, especially with a large class of children, as they are incapable of following a long train of reasoning, and easily grow distracted and confused. Furthermore this method consumes much time, as it arrives at the desired point only by a long circuitous route, which the method of direct explanation would often attain by a single word.

This Socratic method may even become very objectionable, viz., when it seeks to derive all truth solely from reason. It thus develops into pure rationalism. The catechist is the messenger of God, and as such must

communicate the positive revelation, such as he has received it, *i. e.*, as a revelation. Religious instruction must be based on the authority of God. The children must be told what holy truths God has taught us, and must be led to accept those truths upon His authority.

This method may be employed, however, as a complement to the method of direct communication, *i. e.*, after the doctrine has been communicated directly, it may be explained and developed likewise by the Socratic method. In this wise the catechist will lead the child to infer and derive from perceptions and analogies that are familiar to him, ideas and general truths, or to discover, learn, and prove from reason natural truths of religion, such as the existence and attributes of God, etc. Secondly, he will analyze into their component elements ideas and truths already learned, explain and compare them, deduce proximate applications or corollaries, etc. For example, God is the most perfect being; hence He is omnipotent, most wise, merciful, etc. He is a spirit, hence invisible. Thus, again, the necessity of a resolution of amendment and of satisfaction may be inferred from the nature of contrition.

Questions should always be put in a correct, distinct, clear, brief, and easy form; they should be gradatory, proceeding step by step. The answer should be given in a loud tone of voice, in a correct, distinct, and dignified form, and always in entire sentences. When the answer is incorrect, the catechist must ascertain the reason of the misapprehension, in order to correct it more readily and effectually.

118. Catechetical Method of Delivery with a View to Impressing and Inculcating the Subject.—It is necessary that the subject-matter of instruction be well impressed upon the memory of the child, for subsequent instruction must be based upon previous instruction and refer back

to it. The supreme reason, however, is that the religious truth must influence and govern the life of the catechumen, and hence remain impressed upon the mind.

The catechist must therefore see to it that his pupils faithfully retain the essentials of Revelation, namely: *a*) the main facts of Revelation and Redemption, or the Bible history. These facts should be committed to memory, as far as possible, in the words of Holy Writ. *b*) It is of great importance that the children learn the catechism, or at least the most necessary parts of it, by heart. *c*) It is not advisable to burden the memory of children with religious verses, sayings, etc. The word of God is itself the most wholesome food of the mind.

The children should be accustomed to prepare their lessons in such a manner that their recitation will take the form of ready and logical reading, *i. e.*, that it be fluent though not too rapid, loud, distinct, and correctly accentuated.

The general means of impressing a subject are the same for children as given in Homiletics, No 70. The first means is a clear, intelligible instruction, illustrated by biblical facts. The second is frequent repetition, viz., after every explanation and at the beginning and end of every instruction; another repetition at the end of each year, and finally the review of the whole catechism in the Sunday instruction. The third and most important means of impressing religious truth upon the memory is to embody the truth in the life of the child, to render evident to the child and the catechumen in general the intimate relation between religious truth and actual life; to secure the practical application of the truth by the child. The explanation of this means, however, requires a special chapter on Catechetical Education.

CHAPTER VIII.

CATECHETICAL EDUCATION.

ART. I.

THE PRACTICE OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

119. Different Kinds of Practices.—Catechetical Education aims to lead the child to Christ by directing it in the daily practice of religious truth, with the assistance of the grace derived from participation in divine worship, and by a wise exercise of discipline in the widest sense of the term.

The Catholic school is not merely an establishment for reading and instruction, but an educational institution. Instruction must never be separated from education. Without education instruction is barren, whilst, on the other hand, education can never succeed without instruction. Education must go hand in hand with instruction, and must itself be promoted by a careful guidance and training in the manner of attending divine worship.

Hence catechetical education is the art of leading catechumens, *a*) to the practice of the religious truths inculcated, *b*) to the practices of divine worship.

These practices may be divided into two classes, viz., such as are immediately connected with religious instruction, and such as the catechumen takes upon himself spontaneously outside of the time of instruction.

Both kinds of practices may have reference either to

the inner life of the catechumen (his interior religion and morality) or to his exterior life (his exterior religious and moral conduct), and tend to cherish, confirm, and perfect both this interior and exterior life.

120. Practices of the Interior Religious-Moral Life, which are Immediately Connected with Catechetical Instruction.— Each time that the catechist has presented a truth to the mind, will, or affections of the catechumens, he must see that they accept this truth, and express it by an act of faith, hope, charity, contrition, adoration, thanksgiving, in a suitable prayer, verse, or scriptural text. He should invariably ask himself: "What interior acts does this truth require or suggest?" If the truth in question is a truth of faith, it always demands an act of faith and of gratitude to God for revealing it. The special subject-matter of the dogma may furnish special reasons for an act of thanksgiving, *v. g.*, the doctrine of the Incarnation; or an act of adoration, as, *v. g.*, the doctrine of Creation; or of desire, as the doctrine of heaven; or of fear, as the doctrine of hell; or of prayer, as the doctrine of the necessity of grace. In the case of truths of morality the catechist should ask himself: "May I certainly or probably assume that these children have deliberately sinned against this moral truth, or may I suppose the contrary?" In both cases he should elicit with the children a resolution to observe this moral doctrine. The first case of certain or possible transgression requires besides an examen of conscience and sincere contrition.

The catechist must zealously endeavor to lead the children to a self-knowledge, and therefore induce them to the practice of self-examination. To this end he must accustom the children to listen reverentially to the instruction, and to apply it constantly to their own persons. The manner and method of instruc-

tion must convince the child that the object is not merely knowledge, and the exhibition of knowledge, but to live in conformity with the truth; that every man is therefore obliged to examine often and seriously his interior and exterior life by the light of this truth, and in reading as well as hearing it to apply it to himself personally.

But this conviction is not at all sufficient; the catechist must guide the children in the practice of this self-examination. He can do this best by following up every explanation of such a doctrine with a practical self-examination of the children, telling them to reflect whether and in how far they have hitherto observed this law; that if they have not done so (or in case of a prohibition have acted thus), they have committed sin, and must be sorry for it and confess it.

Example. If the catechist has explained the sinfulness of telling a lie, he may by exhortation lead the children to examine themselves on this subject, to elicit contrition and a resolution of amendment. "Now if you had had the misfortune of telling a deliberate lie, would you not then have committed sin? Would not God be obliged to punish you for it, unless you were sorry for it? Now reflect for a few moments. Have you never told a lie from fear? never told a lie to obtain something? never to injure somebody else? or out of fun? If you have told such a lie, or perhaps many lies, have you not displeased God? and what would God be obliged to do unless you were sorry for this sin? And if you are sorry for your sin, must you not be resolved never to do it again, and beg God to help you never to tell another lie? Well, then, let us all together pray to God that He may give us the grace never to tell a lie in future," etc.

The importance, ay, indispensable necessity of such

practices, is self-evident. For in the first place, children are instinctively impelled to give expression to their faith, their conviction of the truth, the feelings and resolutions called forth by it. Secondly, such truths only as are practised by children exercise any influence over their lives, and are appropriated not only by their memory, but by their will and affections. Thirdly, by combining the practice of religion with instruction the children become habituated not only to learn ideas and propositions of faith, but to believe, hope, love, and act, and thus come to consider instruction and the carrying out of the instruction as things necessarily and essentially united. Finally, these practices above all teach children to pray in spirit and in truth. They learn thereby to pray with deep conviction, real feeling, and sincere resolve of the will. But for this end it is necessary that the instruction, exhortation, reproof, etc., of the catechist be accepted by the children in faith and feeling, and be expressed in prayer.

As regards the manner of conducting these practices, the catechist may lead in the prayer, and the children say it aloud or silently with him, or he may request the children to make these acts silently for themselves. These acts are best expressed by appropriate texts of Scripture, by familiar verses, by well-known formulas of prayer. Sometimes they will be made in the course of the instruction, sometimes at the end; sometimes they will be entirely omitted, sometimes made repeatedly during the same instruction. In all these things the tact and discretion of the catechist must dictate the supreme rule.

These acts must above all be perfectly well prepared, and flow, as it were, spontaneously from the subject-matter, and manifest themselves as the natural expression of real, interior sentiments of faith, hope, charity,

contrition, etc. They must not occur too frequently, nor continue too long.

A beautiful letter of St. Francis Xavier¹ explains his method of catechizing. The letter is addressed to his confrères at Rome, and is dated at Cochin, January 12th, 1544. "On Sundays I assemble men and women, boys and girls, in the house of prayer. . . . I lead in the prayer of the sign of the Cross, the Our Father, Hail Mary, and the Creed, saying them with a loud voice and in their mother-tongue. I let them repeat these prayers in common, which they very much enjoy. After this I repeat the Apostles' Creed, making a pause after each article, and asking them whether they firmly believe it. Crossing their arms upon their breasts, they all protest unanimously and with a loud voice their firm and sincere faith. I let them repeat the Creed oftener than other prayers, at the same time impressing upon them that they who firmly believe it are called Christians. After the Creed I inculcate the Ten Commandments, telling them with earnestness that these contain the Christian Law; that he who observes all of them faithfully is a good Christian and sure of his salvation, whilst he that transgresses but a single one of them is a bad Christian, and is certain to be damned unless he does penance for his sin. This thought makes a great impression upon the neophytes, for they thus see the great holiness of the Christian Law. After this we repeat the articles of the Creed, saying after each article the Our Father, Hail Mary, and a suitable invocation. After the first article, for instance, I bid them say with me: 'Jesus, Son of the living God, grant us the grace to believe firmly this first article of Thy holy doctrine. We offer up to this end the prayer which Thou hast Thyself taught us.' Then the other prayers: 'Holy Mary, Mother of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, obtain from thy dearest Son for us the grace firmly and faithfully to believe this first article of His holy doctrine.' And thus after each of the other articles.

"In rehearsing the Ten Commandments I proceed in a similar manner. After reciting in common the first commandment, that of the love of God, we continue: 'Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, grant that we may love Thee above all things!' and then we recite the Our Father for this grace. We continue further: 'Holy Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ, obtain for us from thy Son the grace

¹ S. Francisci Xaverii Epist. lib. i. ap. 14, n. 3, 4. Bononiæ, 1795, vol. i., p. 81, sq.

carefully to observe this first holy commandment,' and thereupon recite the Hail Mary. Similarly with the other nine commandments. I accustom them, moreover, to pray earnestly for this grace in their daily prayers, and sometimes tell them that if they obtain it and co-operate with it, they will obtain all else in greater abundance than they themselves could desire."

121. The Practices of Interior Religious-Moral Life outside of the Time of Instruction.—Unless the children preserve and cultivate by their own free activity the religious-moral life implanted in them, all the good impressions they have received from without will soon again vanish. It is of the greatest importance, therefore, to induce and lead them to renew these impressions frequently, and of their own accord.

To this end they must be convinced: *a*) That religious truth is soon lost and rendered entirely inefficacious for man, unless he of his own accord preserves and cherishes it by frequent acts of faith, charity, etc. *b*) Especially at such times when the catechumens feel elevated and happy in their faith and pious sentiments, they should be made to appreciate the sadness of their lot if they forfeited all this again, and the certainty of losing it, unless they constantly cultivate these impressions. *c*) The catechist should impress upon them that he may indeed, with the help of God, lead them by instruction and guidance to faith and virtue, but that he is unable to preserve either for them; that this depends upon their own free will; that they must actively embrace and cultivate virtue. *d*) He must point out to them that they will never fall into a mortal sin as long as they continue in their present good dispositions and resolutions, but that on the other hand all sin begins with neglect, and develops into forgetfulness of God and His holy will.

Upon such grounds he must constantly request his catechumens to cultivate and develop their faith and the

sentiments of faith. But this request must not be vague and indefinite, but made with reference to definite truths. Especially the main doctrines of Christianity should be recommended to constant practice. At the same time the catechist should point out the time and occasion when such acts should be made, *v. g.*, at rising, retiring; at seeing the church, the crucifix; during labor, in temptation, in tribulation, etc. Furthermore he ought to propose formulas to them, by means of which they may elicit such acts, texts, verses, etc., which they may have before learned from their catechism. Finally, it is essentially necessary constantly to ascertain by questions whether these directions are followed, and to direct the children to carry out these injunctions as a matter of conscience.

Besides renewing these impressions received in instruction, the children should be recommended to elicit such or to follow them up by their own effort, *v. g.*, to attend religious instruction and religious exercises diligently and zealously; to read Christian books; to seek good companionship; to profit by daily occurrences, such as annoyances, sufferings, persecutions, etc.; to remember good admonitions, good advice, certain texts of Holy Writ, etc.

122. Self-imposed Practices of Exterior Religious-Moral Life.

—The exterior life of his catechumens, no less than the interior, must receive the attention of the catechist. Those religious acts which refer to his conduct in church, in school, at home, at labor, or during recreation, towards parents, teachers, brothers, and sisters, etc., should be no less cultivated by the child himself than interior religious acts. But above all it is of primary importance to convince the child that it is essential to Christian life to practise self-denial, and to direct him in this practice.

The catechist should therefore point out the occasions for such practice, the objects of mortification, and the manner of practising it. He should teach the catechumens how they may and must control and overcome sensual pleasure or pain, sensual desire or aversion, *v. g.*, in severe cold or heat; in hard labor; in difficult school tasks; in eating or drinking; in inclinations to anger, disobedience at rising in the morning, etc. He must teach them to control themselves in such circumstances, to conquer their inclination or disinclination, to rise cheerfully and speedily, to stop play at the sound of the bell, though the inclination to the contrary be great, to keep up courage and determination in difficult labors, etc.

But even when there is no question of fulfilling a duty, this self-denial should often be practised for its own sake; *v. g.*, by not partaking of a favorite dish at table, by restraining their tongue, their eyes, even from legitimate indulgence, etc.

There are many occasions during the year peculiarly adapted to suggest such exhortation to self-denial, *v. g.*, the seasons of Lent and Advent. But such exhortation should not be limited to any particular season. On the other hand, the catechist must not demand too much of the child, and endeavor to facilitate such practices by appropriate means.

The first and foremost of these means, as indeed for all Christian virtue, is the grace of God. The children must therefore be instructed how they may by divine grace, and active co-operation with it, become good Christians.

ART. II.

PRAYER AND ATTENDANCE AT DIVINE WORSHIP.

123. How to Educate Children in the Practice of Prayer.—

Divine grace, which is absolutely necessary for a truly Christian life, is communicated by divine worship. Hence the necessity of a correct understanding of this divine worship and of early and thorough initiation in its practice. This implies: *a*) a conscientious, continued practice of prayer; *b*) a living participation in divine service, and especially in the holy sacrifice of the Mass; *c*) a frequent and worthy reception of the holy sacraments.

Prayer is one of the most efficacious means of religious-moral education. It greatly assists the instruction and education of the child, and exercises a supreme influence upon the religious life, even in later years. But to obtain this end, it must be practised in the spirit of Christ and the Church. The catechist will therefore labor to have the children: *a*) learn and understand the usual formulas of prayer; *b*) observe the proper manner of prayer; and *c*) cultivate the true spirit of prayer.

a) Although the formulas of prayer are something merely external, they must by no means be neglected. Christ Himself taught us this by teaching His disciples a definite formula, and the Church follows His example. Such a formula is far more necessary for children than for adults, since they are unable to express themselves, and hence unable to pray without a given formula. With regard to practising these formulas the catechist need not invent new ones, but should rest satisfied with those that are in public and private daily use among Christians. With children six years of age,

the sign of the Cross, the Our Father, and the Hail Mary form the subject of the first religious instruction. The other prayers are practised later, generally at the beginning and close of school-hours.

b) With regard to the manner, the prayers should always be said in a loud but not in a shouting tone, slowly, distinctly, correctly, and in a natural manner. As regards the posture, the prayers in school are generally said standing, in church, kneeling, so that the body be in an upright position. The head should not be held to one side, or forward, the hands must be folded on the breast, the eyes directed to the crucifix in school, to the altar in church.

The example of the teacher is the best guide for children in the manner of praying.

c) In order to cherish the proper spirit of prayer in the children, the catechist must acquaint the children with the nature and blessings of prayer, so that they may look upon prayer as something sacred, and hold it in high esteem; at the same time he must impress upon them that mere prayer of the lips is worthless. He must furthermore instruct them concerning the qualities of prayer, and lead them to a full understanding of its formulas. He must especially endeavor to habituate them to say these prayers not merely intelligently, but with a cheerful and joyful heart and the proper prayerful disposition. Every formula of prayer, if it is to be said with the proper sentiments, presupposes certain convictions and affections, which move the heart and prompt an expression in words. The catechist will do well, therefore, to excite these convictions and feelings first, so that the children may comprehend more and more the full import of the words, and learn with what disposition they ought to be uttered. Thus the children will not only learn to understand the words, but

to *pray* them. They will grow into the habit of saying these prayers in the proper spirit.

Example. The prayer of the Our Father, "Lead us not into temptation." To pray this properly it is necessary: *a*) to have a sincere and heartfelt desire for righteousness. Man must not only not love and seek the danger of sin, he must think of it with concern and shun it, because virtue, which is endangered by it, is the highest good. How could he otherwise utter this prayer with sincerity and earnestness? *b*) He must believe in the existence of the enemy within and without, for how can he sincerely pray to be delivered from the enemy who does not know or believe in this enemy? *c*) He should know his own weakness. If he is filled with conceit, pride, and levity, he will suppose himself equal to any temptation. *d*) He must be deeply convinced of the power and readiness of God to rescue us from temptation. *e*) When the temptation has been avoided or overcome, God alone must receive honor and praise therefor.

In order then to teach the proper method and spirit in which that prayer should be said, the catechist must implant these convictions and sentiments. And as often as he has in the course of his instructions elicited these sentiments, he should cause them to be expressed by that prayer. Thus the catechumen will grasp the spirit of the prayer, and he will say the prayer filled with this spirit. He will not only know what the words are meant to express, but he will intend to express it. The oftener these sentiments are called forth in him and the oftener these words are said with such sentiments, the more speedily and certainly and thoroughly will he learn to pray.

124. How to Lead Children to Participate Properly in Divine Service in General.—A heartfelt participation in divine service is of high importance to children who have arrived at the age of reason. Public divine service has for children, no less than for adults, a threefold purpose, viz., to serve God, to obtain manifold graces, and to express and cherish in themselves and others religious sentiments.

To attain this threefold end the catechist must endeavor, in union with teachers and parents, to initiate the children in divine service. Since this service is to

occupy the entire man, he must qualify the mind, the will, and the affections of the children for proper participation in this service, and thus obviate neglect and contempt of this service in later years. Ignorance is most frequently the cause of this neglect, and the best preventive of this is a thorough instruction in the sublime meaning and value of divine service. This instruction can, however, be but gradual, and must progress from year to year.

With the lowest class the catechist will endeavor to show the importance, holiness, and blessedness of this service by means of easy, individual object lessons, *v. g.*, the tabernacle, the sanctuary-lamp, the altar, crucifix, candles, chancel, baptistry, confessional, sacred vestments, vessels, etc. Such explanations will easily lead the children to understand why they should conduct themselves reverentially in church, genuflect before the altar, fold their hands, be quiet and attentive, and love to attend the service. In the higher classes he must direct the attention of the children more to the essence and intrinsic connection of the acts of divine service, explain the ceremonies, matter, and form of holy Mass and of other acts of service. After the children have learned the essence and form of divine service, meaning and purpose of the holy seasons, etc., they must be taught that it is not sufficient to know these things, but that the knowledge must evidence itself in their lives. They must, for example, in Advent elicit a holy desire for Christ, render thanks for the birth of Christ at Christmas, do penance for their sins in Lent, pray for the grace of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, conduct themselves becomingly in holy places, etc., etc.

A systematic liturgical instruction is, of course, impossible in an elementary course. The most that can be done is to explain, on every occasion presented by the

holy seasons, by Bible history and the catechism, the essential points of divine service. Especially the eve of a Sunday or holy-day and the days following are suitable occasions for repeating this instruction. In the higher classes it is very advisable to connect the instruction with the explanation of the respective Gospel.

This explanation of the Gospel may be made somewhat after the following method: *a*) The Gospel should be read aloud and distinctly by one or several children, according to its length and difficulty. *b*) Then the necessary explanation of the introductory and other words that do not belong to the sacred text, *v. g.*, "At that time," etc. It is best for this purpose to give a short narrative of the time and occasion of the Gospel event. *c*) Then in continual discourse the Gospel itself should be briefly explained, and the whole explanation be reviewed by questions. *d*) After the explanation, suitable application should be made, which is often best done by questions, thus leading the children to make the application themselves. All the various explanations may be of service to the catechist in this labor, especially the popular *Goffine*.

125. How to Lead Children to Attend Holy Mass Properly.—The holy sacrifice is the centre of all acts of divine service. Hence the children must from the age of reason be introduced to the understanding and proper manner of attending this sacred function. The law of the Church obliges them to hear Mass on Sundays and holy-days of obligation. Besides, it has become a custom to require the daily attendance of children at Mass, unless circumstances render this very difficult or impossible.

Attendance at Mass implies first of all bodily presence during the entire service. The children ought therefore to be accustomed to come to Mass in time, and ought never to be suffered to lounge about the church during Mass. It is best to assemble them in the school before Mass, and lead them in ranks to church, where they take their assigned places in a quiet and orderly manner. It is necessary for the health and

proper comfort of the children, especially those that come from a distance, to attend to the heating and ventilation of the church during the time of divine service. The next thing required is external devotion. The children must abstain from such actions as hinder their attention to the holy sacrifice, and show a conduct which may be reasonably expected of him who at least virtually intends to participate in the divine service. This is required by the law of God, binding us to serve Him with soul and body, and necessary, moreover, for self-edification as well as for the edification of others.

The means of securing this external devotion are both indirect and direct. The indirect means, which especially for children is generally more efficient than the direct, is above all the example of adults. In the first place, then, the pastor should show himself a model of devotion in church. He must also cultivate in his congregation, and especially among youths—who serve as proximate and immediate models for children—a great devotion to the holy sacrifice of the Mass. Particular solicitude is necessary with regard to the servers at the altar. They must be made to acquire that devout deportment which, apart from its propriety in the sacred precincts of the sanctuary, edifies all the congregation, and especially the children. Inattentive, indevout servers, given to laughing, talking, looking about, clad in soiled and torn vestments, shouting the Mass-prayers in a hurried, irreverent manner, running needlessly about the sanctuary, etc., etc., are an infallible means of destroying devotion among the children, especially among the boys. And since the celebrant cannot himself, during Mass, give attention to the conduct of the servers, he should appoint some one else,—in the first place the teachers,—to report any unbecoming conduct on their part. The surroundings and ap-

pointments of the church and sanctuary should be arranged with a view to enhance devotion. Everything should be neat, imposing, and attractive, and all distracting, worldly noise, as far as possible, be excluded.

Direct Means for Furthering Devotion at Mass.—The children must be imbued with a great reverence for the house of God. *a)* Boys must be directed to bare their head in passing the church, and before entering it. All must enter and leave the church with becoming gait, take holy water reverently on both occasions, make the genuflections properly, kneel and stand devoutly, etc. They must frequently be instructed on the sinfulness of misbehavior in church. *b)* The children ought to be assigned proper places, if possible, so as to give all children a full view of the altar. Their seats and kneeling benches ought to be sufficiently comfortable, not too crowded, narrow, too low or too high, since discomfort creates disturbance. *c)* The children ought to be under constant, judicious, and patient supervision. The teachers ought to consider this supervision in its true light, as a labor of angels. *d)* All wanton and deliberate misbehavior should receive censure or punishment, not in the church, but at school. In church, a look, a mere sign, or a whisper should be sufficient to restore order. The children should receive frequent instruction on the sanctity of the place and the importance of divine service, and should be filled with due respect for the authority of priest and teacher. Above all these externals is necessary

Interior Devotion.—This consists in a sincere disposition to honor God by participating in the divine sacrifice, and therefore to hear Mass with attention and reverence. The children must therefore from an early age be zealously directed to this end, and be carefully instructed not only on the dignity, excellence, and effects of the holy

sacrifice, and on the duty of attending it properly, but likewise on the manner and means they must employ to attend it devoutly and properly. And this instruction must assume a very specific and detailed character, and must be often repeated. For only then will the catechist be able to correct wrong or defective impressions, and keep alive in children zeal in practising this instruction. Like all instruction, this also must proceed from the easy to the more difficult. The various methods of hearing Mass ought to be carefully distinguished with reference to the age and mental development of the child. St. Thomas and Catholic theologians in general distinguish three methods of attending Mass.

126. Different Methods of Hearing Mass.—The first method, which is at the same time the lowest in degree, consists in looking upon the words and actions of the celebrant as holy religious acts, and forming the general intention of honoring God, even though a person be ignorant of the meaning of the words and ceremonies. This intention invests the attention with the dignity of an act of religion and elevates the mind to God. Such attention and intention may be required of all children, even the smallest.

Though they have no distinct idea as yet of the holy sacrifice, they possess some knowledge of God and His attributes (His omnipotence, omnipresence, holiness, goodness), and are able to form a general intention to think of God and honor God, to pay attention to that which is done at the altar, because such attention is pleasing to God. If they do this, if they make the sign of the Cross at the beginning of the Mass, and form the thought that they will now be very attentive to everything the priest does at the altar, because it is pleasing to Almighty God; if they upon becoming distracted again recollect themselves, or are reminded,

to look to the altar and thereby please God, who sees them, they satisfy the obligation of hearing Mass devoutly. Their action is no longer merely mechanical, but a pious act of the soul—a prayer; and they certainly satisfy the first method of hearing Mass.

To this effect, then, the catechist should impart a lively perception of that which is done at Mass, either by a simple, easy description, or, what is better, by means of pictures (in their prayer-books), and at the same time request them to give attention to this in church as to something very holy, because God so wills it and loves it. They should be told to give special attention when the server rings the bell. The chief parts of the Mass (Offertory, Consecration, and Communion) may already be explained briefly, and the children learn short formulas of prayer, which they recite for themselves or in common. This will form the transition to the

Second Method of Hearing Mass.—This consists in paying attention to the meaning and significance of the acts of the celebrant, especially of the chief parts of the Mass, at least to the Consecration and the Communion. The attention must be combined with at least a virtual intention to honor God. It would be contrary to all sound pedagogics to delay the explanation of the Mass until the children were able to comprehend it fully. Children of 8 and 9 years should be taught something at least of the meaning of this great mystery; they should be told of the greatness and sublimity of holy Mass, and of the necessity of endeavoring to attend it worthily out of love and gratitude to Jesus, who became Man and died for us, and gives us new evidence of His love in the holy sacrifice. No one should consider such explanation impossible or unprofitable with children, who have already learned the rudiments of faith from Bible history, and whose young, believing souls are

rendered intelligent beyond their years by the interior operation of grace.

These children, then, should be told in simple narrative form that Jesus instituted the holy sacrifice in remembrance of Him, and that we must therefore remember Jesus and what He did for us. God created men to be eternally happy, if they obeyed His command. But they committed sin (*Confiteor*) and would have been condemned to hell, had not God had mercy on them (*Kyrie*) and sent His only begotten Son to make them worthy again of heaven. At the birth of Our Lord the angels sang (*Gloria*). Jesus prayed to His Heavenly Father for men (*Collect*), and instructed them what to do and believe (*Gospel* and *Credo*). He offered Himself for their sins (*Offertory*), and suffered scourging, crowning with thorns, etc., until finally He was crucified (*Consecration*). He rose again from the dead, instituted the Church and the holy sacraments, and after forty days ascended into heaven, blessing His disciples (*Consecration—Last Blessing*).

The same Jesus is present on the altar after Consecration, true God and true Man, present with the same body, the same blood that He shed on the cross. We cannot see Him, but He has said it that He would be present as often as His priests would say the words of holy Consecration. When the priest therefore elevates the sacred host and the chalice, all must kneel down, bow their heads, and adore and love and thank Jesus. At Holy Communion the server rings three times, and all must strike their breasts three times, and wish that Jesus would come into their hearts and make them pure and good.

If children have been brought to occupy their minds thus with the acts of the priest and to unite with him, or at least to attend to the meaning of Consecration and Communion, and to consider, implicitly at least, the acts of the priest as holy acts of religion, by which God is honored, they have acquired the second method of hearing Mass. By reciting at the same time with intelligence and devotion short prayers at some individual parts of the Mass they ascend to the

Third Step in Attending Mass Properly, according to the Third and Highest Method.—This method consists in mak-

ing pious meditations on the mysteries of the holy sacrifice, or on the divine attributes in general, or on any of them in particular; or on the Passion of Our Lord, or any one or several parts of it; or in seeking at least to elevate the mind to God by vocal prayer. At the same time the attention should be directed to the chief parts of the Mass, especially to the Consecration and the Communion. For though to hear Mass it is sufficient to unite one's self in general with the priest, by making at the beginning of Mass implicitly or explicitly the intention to offer up the holy sacrifice through the hands of the priest—even if the subsequent prayers stand in no closer connection with the holy sacrifice—it is more perfect to unite with the acts of the priest in particular, and to follow in prayer the course of the Mass. The catechist should therefore direct the children to follow this method by telling them in particular what prayers they should say at various parts of the Mass.

Example. At the Confiteor, contrition and a resolution to amend this or that fault; at the Kyrie, to pray for the grace to lead a good Christian life; at the Gospel and Credo, the Creed and a prayer to preserve holy faith unto the end; at the Offertory, to offer up their actions, their body and soul, their whole life to God, with a prayer never to fall into a mortal sin. From the Offertory to the Consecration to say various prayers for themselves, their parents, brothers, and sisters, for the Holy Father, the Bishop and priests, for all those present, and for all Christians; at the Consecration, short aspirations. After Consecration, acts of faith, hope, and charity, together with a prayer for the departed; at Holy Communion a formula for spiritual Communion; after Communion, prayers to pass the day in good works and without sin. Recently various booklets with Mass-prayers for children have been published. They are invaluable in assisting children to attend Mass properly. They are adapted to be said in common by the children, with some prayers to be said by one or several children. The catechist should exercise great judgment in selecting the best formulas and appointing those children to lead who have a loud

and clear voice, and a devout manner of recitation. He should at various times explain these prayers so as to bring home their meaning fully and effectually to the children.

Thus the children will also be initiated into the proper manner of using a prayer-book.

127. The Training of Children for the Proper Reception of the Holy Sacraments.—The holy sacraments are the immediate sources of divine grace, and the greatest means of stimulating, nourishing, confirming, and perfecting the religious-moral life of man. The catechist must therefore make every endeavor to lead his catechumens to appreciate them properly, and to receive them with the best possible disposition. He must consider it his most urgent duty to inculcate the supreme importance of these sacred functions and our great need of them in spiritual life. In administering these sacraments, he must dispose the hearts of the children to pious sentiments and resolutions by a proper festive ceremonial.

Each time, but especially the first time, that the children receive the holy sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, and before receiving Confirmation, they must be prepared with the greatest care and solicitude.

128. How to Lead Children to Receive Worthily the Sacrament of Penance.—The sacrament of Penance is a most efficacious means of leading children to Christ. The frequent, worthy reception of this sacrament impresses the children with a due appreciation of the nature of sin, penance, and reconciliation, which have so great an influence on the entire life of man. The commandments of God and the Church are each time vividly and distinctly recalled to memory; obligations and transgressions are outlined more clearly and definitely. The grievous nature of sin against God and of the punishment deserved impresses itself more deeply, and creates a more ardent desire for reconciliation, especially in the heart of the

child, which is far more tender and more susceptible to the burden of guilt.

The weakness and inconstancy of the youthful heart render this holy sacrament especially necessary and profitable in its case, as it not only obtains for it pardon for sin and reconciliation with God, but the particular grace of avoiding evil and doing good. Apart from this grace of the sacrament, there is no occasion which admits of so deep and lasting an influence upon the heart and will of the child as the occasion of confession. The confessor there deals with every child individually. The innermost folds of the heart of the child are disclosed to his view, and he has the most favorable opportunity possible to notice the first sproutings of evil, and to tear them up by the roots.

Besides, it is of inestimable importance for after life that the child should be well grounded in the practice of confession, because for the adult confession, as a rule, is indispensably necessary for salvation.

One of the first and highest duties of the pastor, therefore, is to see that the children make frequent and good confessions. It is for the pastor to determine at what age children are to make their first confession, and how often they are to go to confession during the year.

As a general principle, children ought not to be permitted to confess at too early an age, lest this serious business degenerate into a mere farce; nor should they be kept from the confessional too long; certainly not till after their ninth year. If the child knows those truths that are necessary (*necessitate medii*) for salvation, and has some knowledge of sin, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, his knowledge is sufficient for absolution. It is but necessary that to this knowledge be added the proper disposition, of which the confessor alone can judge.

The remote preparation for confession consists in a careful religious instruction, during which the catechist improves every opportunity to direct the attention of the child to the future confession, to stimulate in him a lively sense of his sinfulness and an ardent desire for purity from sin and reconciliation with God, by frequently reciting with him the corresponding acts.

The proximate preparation for confession consists in *a*) instruction for confession and *b*) in going through the requisite acts before confession with the children.

ad a) In his instructions for confession the catechist must observe the following cautions: As in all religious instruction, so here particularly must the tone of teaching be serious and impressive, though kind and paternal. Incapable or neglected children should form the object of his particular care, and receive special encouragement. Then he should briefly resume the principal doctrines which precede the chapter on the sacraments, emphasizing those that are specially related to the sacrament of Penance, explaining this relation. Speaking, for instance, of the omniscience of God, he will tell them: "God knows all the past; He knows all our sins; He sees into our hearts; He knows whether we are really sorry for our sins, and whether we really intend not to commit them again," etc. Speaking of the doctrine of hell: "Every one that has committed a mortal sin will be condemned to hell unless he does true penance;" dwelling on the doctrine of redemption: "God was so infinitely merciful to us as to send us His Divine Son to redeem us from sin. If Our Saviour had not come, we should all die in sin, but through Him we may now receive pardon for our sins, be they ever so great," etc.

The doctrine of the sacrament of Penance must be treated clearly and thoroughly. The terms that occur in this connection must be made plain to the children and impressed upon their memory. The necessary formulas must be well learned, and be recited by them frequently, slowly, and intelligently.

This will be attained most easily by prayerful consideration of the text with the children. *Example.* "In the confessional you say: 'I confess to Almighty God,' etc. God Himself sees and

hears your confession. You can hide nothing from Him, so in confession you must never think of concealing anything, but confess all your sins. You must think of this when you say: 'I confess to Almighty God.'"

The children must not merely be taught the acts requisite for the sacrament of Penance, but must be formally initiated in them. With regard to the Invocation of the Holy Ghost, *v. g.*, it is not sufficient to exhort the children to make this invocation frequently and earnestly, but it will be well if the catechist himself at the approach of the time of confession prays with the children that God may enlighten them to see all their faults and sins, grant them a sincere contrition, and help them to make a good, entire confession.

The Examination of Conscience is best made according to the Ten Commandments and the Seven Capital Sins. The catechist must help the children to make this Examination of Conscience by going through the individual commandments, and pointing out how they may be transgressed by children, and then exhorting them seriously to remember whether they have been guilty of such transgressions; if so, to note that in their mind for confession. The sixth commandment should not be passed over, but the questions concerning it be discreet and cautious, without any air, however, of solemn mystery. It is best to bring the children to examine themselves: whether they have not been in the company of bad children, seen or heard wicked things, whether they have been guilty of any immodesty in dress, at play, etc. They should be well instructed to examine themselves on the number of times they have committed a grievous sin, and on the aggravating circumstances that change the species of a sin. At the same time they ought to be led to examine and confess their venial sins, especially since they are liable to mistake the nature of a sin, holding a really grievous sin to be merely venial. The best method of Examination of Conscience is certainly constantly to apply in religious instruction the doctrine that is explained to the life of the child, and to examine his life by the light of the doctrine. Of course, this does not exclude the proximate instruction for Examination of Conscience preparatory to confession.

The most important and at the same time the most difficult part of this instruction for confession is the direction of the child to elicit an act of sincere contrition and firm purpose of amendment. This direction consists not merely in explaining the nature and qualities of both, and admonishing the children to make

the act for themselves; the catechist must endeavor by all means to bring the children to conceive a real and sincere sorrow and detestation for sin. To this end he must make these acts for and with the children, reviewing in prayerful contemplation the various motives for contrition. The children must, moreover, be seriously exhorted often to pray for a true, heartfelt, supernatural contrition, and they should offer such a prayer in common with the catechist. With regard to the purpose of amendment they should be accustomed to make it very special, to apply it to their most cherished sin and to the occasions of sin, and to renew it frequently, even daily at their morning prayers.

Even the manner of making the confession ought in some way to be practically exemplified, by rehearsing a fictitious confession and letting the children supplement or correct it. Extreme care must, however, be exercised lest the slightest thought of a violation of the seal might arise in the minds of the children. The main point after explaining the qualities of a good confession is to bring the children to confess very openly and sincerely, and to impress them deeply with the reasons for this.

In explaining satisfaction the catechist should not omit to direct the children to repair the wrong, seek reconciliation, restore stolen things, etc., if at all possible, before confession.

Having concluded the instruction for confession, and announced the day for confession, the catechist exhorts the children to spend the evening previous in retirement and prayer, examining their conscience, making acts of contrition and resolutions of amendment. The parents likewise should, on a suitable occasion, be reminded of the importance of the act their children are to perform, and admonished to assist them by prayer and instruction.

On the day of confession the children assemble in school, and thence proceed orderly to church. Here the catechist once more addresses them briefly on the importance of the sacred occasion. He then kneels before the altar, and with the children recites the acts of invoking the Holy Ghost, Examination of Conscience, Contrition, and resolution of amendment. This practice is of supreme importance for initiating children in the manner of receiving worthily the sacrament of Penance, and, if at all feasible, ought never to be omitted. For even with the most careful instruction and direction in school, children find it very difficult to elicit these acts, especially that of a sincere contrition. Hence with many there is danger of a mere mechanical and, soon, of a sacrilegious confession.

After confession every child should go to the place assigned him, say his penance, and spend some time in further prayers.

In conclusion a remark may be appropriate with regard to the frequency of confession. It is customary to have children go to confession about four times a year, and for smaller children this may suffice. But for larger children, of eleven or twelve years of age, it is highly advisable to receive this holy sacrament oftener. They are in greater danger of mortal sin, and frequent confession will be an effectual means of impressing them with the nature of sin, the dignity of sanctifying grace, etc. Especially children in the last year before receiving their First Holy Communion would very profitably be accustomed to go to confession once a month. Remaining thus constantly in the state of grace, they would in addition realize the necessity of a long and serious preparation for their First Holy Communion. "Suffer the little children to come to Me;" nothing, however, bars their access to their Saviour so effectually as mortal sin.

129. Preparation for First Holy Communion.—Among the most important as well as most consoling obligations of the pastor is the preparation of children for the reception, and particularly for the first reception, of the holy Sacrament of the Altar. Holy Communion is the most sublime and sacred action of life, and hence it requires the most careful and earnest preparation.

The time of admitting children to Holy Communion is to be left to the prudent judgment of the pastor. The Council of Trent, in accord with the admonition of St. Paul, requires the age of discretion, when children are able to "discern the body of the Lord."

The first and essential preparation for Holy Communion is evidently a thorough catechetical instruction and an efficient catechetical training. The more complete

the instruction and the more efficient the training, the better prepared will the child be for receiving the Holy Eucharist.

But besides general instruction, a more immediate preparation by special instruction is required. It is customary to form a separate catechism class of those who are to receive their First Holy Communion. The Council of Baltimore insists that this special instruction be given at least three times a week for six weeks previous to the day of Communion. But this is certainly the minimum. In many parishes the "First Communion Class" is organized about three months before the Communion day, and instruction given almost daily. The entire catechism is gone over with the class. This is more necessary in our country, where so many children receive their first religious instruction only when they prepare to receive Holy Communion. This instruction must be given with the particular view of impressing upon the children *a*) that poor, sinful man is of himself unable to obtain his salvation; *b*) that the assistance of God is granted to him abundantly through the holy sacraments; *c*) that especially the holy Sacrament of the Altar is the source of all blessings and graces. The fruit of this instruction must be above all a lively faith, and a great love and ardent desire for Holy Communion. Fortunately we have at present a number of excellent little books that may serve in this matter as a guide for the pastor. From the beginning of the course of instruction and even before, the pastor should admonish the children to say a daily prayer for the grace of making a worthy Holy Communion. The same admonition should be addressed to the parents.

The proximate preparation consists in a general confession and various other acts preparatory to Holy Communion. It should be a matter of most anxious

interest to the pastor that the children approach the holy table with a pure soul, a contrite and loving heart. He must practise the children in the acts before and after Holy Communion, and see to it that they thoroughly understand and feel the meaning of the words of the formulas.

The last few days before First Holy Communion are in many places spent by the children in retreat. They pass the greater part of these days in silence and spiritual exercises. The one important caution to be observed in such a retreat is not to fatigue the minds of the children, and thus rather impede than further the proper disposition.¹

The priest should caution the parents not to distract the children, or perhaps even defile their hearts on Communion-day by fostering vanity. The children should be assembled at a timely hour in the school-house under the supervision of sisters and teachers, and should not be disturbed in their recollection by parents or visitors. It is advisable for many reasons not to have the Mass at a late hour. In some places the renewal of the baptismal vows is made in the morning, in other places in the afternoon. It is highly recommendable to surround the occasion of the First Holy Communion with pomp and splendor, so as to impress children and adults alike with its impor-

¹ A convenient order of the day for this retreat might be something like the following: 8 A. M., holy Mass, at which the children recite aloud appropriate prayers; 9, instruction; 9.30, Rosary; 10, recreation; 10.15, examination of conscience; 11, reading in common of examples or stories for first communicants, or some other interesting and suitable reading; 11.30, dismissal of class.

1.30 P. M., practice of ceremonies for First Communion; 2.15, instruction on disposition for Holy Communion; 3, recreation; 3.15, prayerful consideration by the catechist with the children of the acts for confession and Communion.

tance, and foster proper sentiments and resolutions. A monstrous abuse, however, is the evening revelry sometimes held at the homes of communicants on this day.

130. Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.—The sacrament of Confirmation is one of the most powerful means of grace; but it will efficaciously influence the lives only of those who have properly prepared themselves, and know how to receive it and how to co-operate with its grace. It is a sacred duty of the pastor, therefore, to see that his charges receive this sacrament only after due preparation.

This preparation must be both interior and exterior. The interior preparation consists in a thorough and salutary religious instruction in general, and in particular on the sacrament of Confirmation, its nature and effects, the manner of receiving it, the duties of the recipient, etc.—in purity of conscience, in diligent prayer, in works of piety, and in previous Holy Communion. The exterior preparation requires proper and becoming apparel and deportment. Formerly fasting was obligatory on the confirmand, and even now adults may be admonished to receive the sacrament fasting, if it is administered at an early hour.

At the approach of the time of Confirmation, the pastor must in good season publicly announce the fact, admonish all those that are to receive it not to neglect this precious opportunity, and particularly charge parents, guardians, and masters to secure this grace to their sons and daughters, wards, and servants. All confirmands should regularly attend the instruction. This instruction should be thorough and complete, dwelling more extensively on the great mission of the Holy Ghost in our souls, and on the necessity and proper manner of devotion to Him. The day before Confirma-

tion all confirmands go to confession, which may, unless individual circumstances create an exception, be a general confession since the First Communion day. The Third Plenary Council warmly recommends that the bishop himself, or some priest in his name, examine the children on the necessary points of religious instruction. Unless the bishop address the confirmands, it is highly advisable that the pastor or some other priest deliver a brief discourse on the importance of the sacrament about to be administered. In some places it is customary to renew the baptismal vows,—certainly a most commendable practice, bringing out also the intimate connection between Baptism and Confirmation.

During Confirmation everything should be avoided that may distract or hinder devotion. The ceremonies in the sanctuary, as well as the arranging of the confirmands, should be well prepared, and everything done to enhance devotion.

APPENDIX

ON THE INSTRUCTION OF CONVERTS.

The Church in this country has in recent years devoted herself more extensively and systematically than ever before to the work of evangelizing Protestants and infidels. The movement has from the beginning been very successful and gives promise of abundant fruit in the saving of souls. The usual method of procedure has been to open the course of instruction with a mission for non-Catholics, where subjects of controversy are discussed and the doubts and difficulties presented in writing by the hearers through the "question box" are answered and solved. After the mission those whom the grace of God leads to seek further light and guidance are formed into a class for thorough instruction and eventual reception into the Church.

In the instruction of these converts the catechist must take into consideration their condition of mind relative to Catholicity. Many have been reared in total ignorance of religion, others have been prejudiced against it, and the Catholic Church especially has been so misrepresented to them in the pulpit, the Sunday-school and in private, that they entertain the most absurd and not infrequently vile notions concerning it. These prejudices are generally most easily and effectually removed by presenting the correct view of the truth and beauty, the holiness and the beneficent influ-

ence of the Catholic religion. Though there be different grades of religious training represented in the class, from practical agnosticism to High-Church Episcopalianism, it will usually be safe to presume for all members only a modicum of previous instruction and therefore to begin with the fundamental truths. Thus the *credenda necessitate medii et praecepti* ought to be thoroughly taught; the proofs for the existence of God, the duty of worshipping Him after His own dictates; the immortality of the soul; the existence of the supernatural and its difference from the natural in the life and virtues of the Christian; the Incarnation, the nature and necessity of the Church, etc.

Since private interpretation is the root of Protestantism and of all heresy, the catechist ought to dwell particularly on the principle of authority, and the obligation of accepting Divine Revelation through God's appointed medium, the Church.

Non-Catholics generally have a great aversion for confession; hence the teacher should, besides proving its divine institution, describe among other features and fruits, the peace and comfort it gives the soul of man.

The duration of the course of instruction will depend largely on the previous knowledge and individual capacity of the catechumen. In most cases, however, it will be found necessary to continue it fully three or four months and sometimes longer, with several instructions each week.

The method of instruction will likewise vary according to the age, attainments, and abilities of the convert. Some experienced priests recommend the memorizing of question and answer of the catechism. When this is feasible, it will be found of great advantage in fixing the truth more firmly and accurately in the mind. A

small catechism would serve this end better, or if a larger one be used the more important questions might be selected and noted for this purpose. In all cases, however, a full, though simple explanation by the catechist is necessary. He will do well, besides frequently questioning the convert, to invite questions with the view of solving any doubt, and of ascertaining whether the explanation has been fully grasped and appropriated by the convert.

Objections advanced mainly for the sake of controversy, from a contentious and captious disposition of the mind, must be met with the fact of the revelation of the truth or mystery, and this fact represented as sufficient to necessitate the assent of the mind and will.

Protestants are largely prejudiced against the use of sacred images, scapulars and the like. They should be taught that, while these things are not essentials, they are very helpful, and that we should be anxious to make our lives as rich and fruitful in practical devotions as possible.

It is highly advisable to request converts from the beginning of their instructions to cease frequenting Protestant service and to be regular attendants at Catholic worship. The convert should be thoroughly impressed with the obligation of observing Catholic laws and practices and of leading a practical Catholic life; above all he should be admonished to look upon the instruction as a grace of God, and to pray daily and fervently for light and strength.

Since attrition is necessary for the reception of Baptism by adults, they should be led, even in case of unconditional Baptism, to make beforehand a confession of their sins. After Baptism the convert should be directed, besides attending the Sunday sermon and the Sunday instruction, to continue a course of reading

on religion, which is so much facilitated at present by the many excellent works published on the Catholic religion in general, on the holy Mass, on the Gospels, the sacraments and sacramentals, and kindred subjects.

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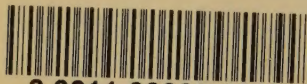
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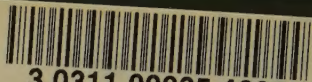
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